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Lexical and Cultural Interactions between Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic Languages in a Medieval Context

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ABSTRACT

The Armeno-Kipchak script serves as a vital medium for preserving and transmitting medieval Eurasia's cultural and historical heritage. This unique script provides insights into linguistic interactions and reflects the literature, culture, language, lifestyle, and religious practices of Armenians who spoke Kipchak. This study explores the linguistic and cultural interactions between the Turkic and Armeno-Kipchak languages in the medieval Eurasian context. The research identifies the key factors that shaped lexical borrowing and cultural assimilation by analyzing the historical, cultural, and social contexts of these interactions. Through contextual analysis, the study explores how historical events, trade, migrations, and religious dynamics influenced linguistic and cultural exchanges. It underscores the importance of investigating these interactions to reconstruct the evolution of language and to gain a comprehensive understanding of the intricate socio-linguistic relationships that characterized medieval Eurasia. By tracing the pathways of cultural and linguistic influences, this research contributes to broader historical and cultural studies, shedding light on the interconnectedness of the Turkic and Armeno-Kipchak linguistic traditions within their shared historical milieu. This finding emphasizes the significance of

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understanding the dynamic interplay of languages and cultures in shaping the historical narrative of Eurasian societies. It serves as a foundational step toward further exploration of medieval language development and cultural transformations. **Keywords:** Armeno-Kipchak Language; Turkic Languages; Lexical Borrowing; Language Contact; Language Evolution

1. Introduction

Language serves as a primary medium for cultural expression and interaction, reflecting the historical and social dynamics of the societies that use it. In the medieval Eurasian context, linguistic interactions were particularly significant, given the diverse cultures, languages, and trade networks that intersected in the region. Among these, the Turkic and Armeno-Kipchak languages are distinguished by providing a prism through which we can examine the intricacies of cross-cultural interactions during this time.

The significant advances in Armeno-Kipchak studies, so noticeable over the past two decades, contrast markedly with the lack of information about the Armenian-Kipchak language in Turkology of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this regard, a somewhat distorted idea of the language itself and the ways of studying it has been strengthened. The problem of studying the Armeno-Kipchak language has arisen only recently as a kind of *Deus ex machina*, that absolutely nothing was known about this language in previous centuries, that the language itself was almost a secret, and its use was limited to a narrow circle of informed people^[1]. Although this superficial impression is contradicted by a significant number of written monuments of the 16th and 17th centuries of the most diverse genres, the Armenian-Kipchak language has acquired an aura of mystery, which modern Turkology will have to dispel. Undoubtedly, the language itself and its various monuments are a real treasure trove for Turkologists studying the history of the Western Kipchak languages. The answer to many questions lies in the language itself, the study of which is progressing quite rapidly. While fully aware of this situation, one cannot, however, ignore the fact that information about what we now call the Armeno-Kipchak language penetrated into literature, narrative, and documentary sources as early as the 15th–17th centuries. This information is of considerable value to modern researchers. If we continue in terms of mystery, these extralinguistic data help to solve the riddle of the language and create new aspects of the problem, which consists in the need to determine the

functions of the Armeno-Kipchak language and establish its genetic links with other Turkic languages against the background of the linguistic situation of the 15th–17th centuries in the Eurasian context^[2, 3]. Researchers have attempted to collect together the statements of 17th-century authors about the Armeno-Kipchak language. The source database of the 15th and 16th centuries demonstrates the importance of extralinguistic data for studying the history of Turkic languages. Research allows us to examine in more detail the function of language among the Armenian colonies of Ukraine.

The earliest mention of the Turkic language of the Armenians of the Northern Black Sea region can be considered the message of the French missionary John of Gallifont, the famous ambassador of the French king Charles VI to Timur, who noted in 1404 in the “Book of the Knowledge of the Land” that the majority of Christians in this region—among them Greeks, many Armenians, Goths, Tats, Ukrainians, Alans, Avars, Kumyks, and others—speak the Tatar language. The famous Polish historian Jan Dlugosz wrote about the identity of the languages of the Armenians and Tatars. He noted in the “History of Poland” that the Tatar clan and people originate from the Armenians, with whom they are identical both in appearance and language.

In the 16th century, the question of the spoken and, especially, the liturgical language of the Armenian settlers began to attract the attention of Polish and other authors. The stimulating factor was the attempts to subordinate the Armenian Gregorian Church in Ukraine to the Pope^[4, 5]. The Italian church figure and diplomat Antonio Maria Graziani met—as secretary to Cardinal G. F. Commendone, who was touring Poland and Ukraine—with the Armenians in Lviv in 1564. Fresh from the meeting, he wrote that the Armenians have codes and church hymns written in Armenian letters and Armenian language, but only some priests read them. They generally speak Scythian and Turkish. In this case, the Scythian language should be understood as Tatar (which corresponded to the cultural and historical ideas of the 16th and 17th centuries). This is how the famous French writer and historian Valentin-Esprit Flechier understood this definition,

translating Graziani's Latin original into French—he translated the quoted passage as they say in Turkish and Tatar. A representative of the Polish Catholic clergy, Lviv Archbishop Jan-Dmitry Solikowski also noted the multilingualism of the Armenians. In his memoirs, “Brief Notes on Polish Affairs,” he emphasized that the Armenians of Lviv had a language in common with the Turks. In terms of the compromise between the Armenian and Polish populations of Lviv that he proposed, Solikowski established that all Armenian gentlemen understood the Turkish language, and this facilitated their large-scale trade with Turkey. In the draft compromise, he claimed that the Armenians could not have rights equal to the Poles since they arrived with their language, which did not exist in Europe, but only in Asia. At the same time, he indicated that the Armenians were supposed to preserve all the rites in their language. The archbishop reported to Rome in 1600 that the Armenians used their language during the liturgy. Solikovsky saw the common language of the Armenians and the Turks as a great political danger for Lviv—the Armenians, with the support of the Turks, could soon take over the city...^[6, 7].

The eminent Italian geographer Giovanni Botero wrote in his “General Relation” (1591) that the Armenians conduct divine services in their language, while in different places they speak different languages, but in Constantinople they are so accustomed to the Turkish language that they pronounce the Lord's Prayer in Armenian with great difficulty. Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that the Turkic phony of the Armenians of Ukraine in the 16th century was not (so well confirmed—starting from the 20s of this century—by written monuments; other contemporaries who wrote about the language of the Armenians of Ukraine did not pay attention^[8–10]). Matvey Mekhovskiy mentioned in 1517 that the Armenians use the Armenian language in their churches. Much more diverse information about the Armenian-Kipchak language has been preserved by Polish, German, French, Dutch, and other authors of the 17th century. In the colophons of Armeno-Kipchak manuscripts of the 16th century, two names of the language are used alternately—Kipchak and Tatar. Both names were used as adequate.

The so-called “Lviv Code of Law” of 1519 (the code according to which legal proceedings were carried out in the Armenian colonies) was translated—as noted in the colophon—into Tatar (tatarc'a). In another undated “Psalter”

of the same time, in an anonymous colophon, the language of the book is defined as Tatar.

In 1618, Simeon equated the Kipchak and Tatar languages. In the second half of the 17th century, Crimean Armenian authors Martiros Krimetsi (poem “History of the Crimean Land”, 1672) and David Krimetsi (colophon of the synaxarion written in Kafa in 1690), describing the Tatar invasion of Crimea, wrote that a people of the Mohammedan religion, called Kipchaks, had broken in^[11–14].

Unfortunately, at present there is a rather distorted idea about the Armeno-Kipchak language. We know the language of the period of its decline, convergence with the Ukrainian and Polish languages, quite well. Private conclusions related to the stage of language extinction apply to the entire period of its functioning. Monuments, one might say, of the normalized and even somewhat purified literary language of the mid-16th to early 17th centuries, although partially published (the Armeno-Kipchak translation of the Lviv Code of Laws, the Chronicle of the Polish Ulus, the Venetian Chronicle, the Armeno-Kipchak part of the Kamenets Chronicle, the Armenian-Kipchak version of the Tale of Akir the Wise, translations of the Psalter and other parts of the Old and New Testaments, prayers, etc.), however, still do not attract due attention and remain in the shadows.

The fascination with monuments of business writing—a language macaronic in nature—has led to the vulgarized idea that the official language (which is indeed very different from the synchronous Crimean Tatar language) is colloquial and almost literary. This, of course, is far from true. There is no doubt that the object of comparative studies—for comparing the Armeno-Kipchak language with other Turkic languages—should first of all be works in the literary language. The entire problem is negatively affected by the lack of development of the ethnic history of the Turkic peoples of Eastern Europe during a medieval context^[15–18].

There is no consistent scientific ethnonymy comparable to the ethnonymy of sources (often interpreted very subjectively), corresponding to ethnolinguistic terminology. The lack of development of generally accepted ethnonymic and ethnolinguistic terminology (despite the diverse, more or less well-thought-out classification schemes of languages) is felt especially in the field of Kipchak studies. The ethnonyms Polovtsy, Komans, Kipchaks are used sometimes as completely adequate synonyms, sometimes as non-identical

concepts. Even more complications arise when using derivative terms. If Polovtsy, Komans, and Kipchaks are often adequate synonyms, then the terms Polovtsian, Komans, and Kipchak language (and even more so Kipchak languages) are far from synonymous^[19, 20].

As is known, the term Kipchak language acts as either a specific or a group concept, and adding a defining determinant to the name Kipchak does not always save the situation. It was in this way that the Tatars (a Turkic, but not Mongolian, population) of the Golden Horde period began to speak Cuman (but, for unknown reasons, not Tatar, although the Codex Cumanicus directly states this), and Cuman continued to be spoken in the 16th–17th centuries by the Turkic-speaking Armenians of Ukraine^[21].

The ethnic history of the Turks of Eastern Europe in the period from the 13th to the 17th centuries is very complex. It reflects the dynamics of nomadic life, partial and gradual urbanization, multi-ethnic contacts, assimilation and dissimilation processes, and tribal relationships that are far from always clear—all against the backdrop of socio-economic and political changes. But even these circumstances can hardly serve as a justification for preserving archaic ethnolinguistic terminology^[22–24]. The development of the Turkic languages took place in specific historical conditions, which are still insufficiently taken into account in the study of the history of the languages of the Kipchak group and lead to such unfounded conclusions as the possibility of preserving the Polovtsian language in the linguistic practice of the Armenian-Turkic speakers of Ukraine. Statements of this type, that the Armeno-Kipchak monuments of the 16th–17th centuries reflected a spoken language belonging to one of the ancient ethnolinguistic branches of the Cumans-Polovtsians, cannot be supported by weighty scientific arguments.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of the Kipchak language group within Turkic studies, yet interactions between Turkic languages and Armeno-Kipchak remain underexplored. Existing literature often focuses on broader Turkic language relationships, leaving a significant gap in our understanding of the lexical and cultural exchanges specific to this context. Despite the importance of the Armeno-Kipchak corpus for understanding medieval Eurasian sociolinguistics, there is limited research on the patterns of lexical borrowing and the cultural factors influencing these

exchanges. Comparative studies within Turkology often omit this unique interaction, resulting in an incomplete picture of Kipchak language development and its influence on and by other linguistic systems. By examining patterns of lexical borrowing and the cultural influences underlying these exchanges, the research seeks to: (1) uncover mechanisms of linguistic contact and integration, providing insights into the processes that shaped the evolution of the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages; (2) illuminate the role of historical, social, and cultural factors in facilitating these interactions, offering a broader understanding of medieval Eurasian societies; and (3) contribute to the existing body of knowledge by filling gaps in research on medieval language contact and cultural exchanges, particularly in the underexplored Armeno-Kipchak context.

1.1. Research Objectives

This study aims to explore the linguistic and cultural interactions between the Turkic and Armeno-Kipchak languages in the medieval Eurasian context.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What patterns of lexical borrowing are evident between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages?
2. How did cultural, historical, and social factors shape these linguistic exchanges?
3. What insights do these interactions provide about the broader historical and cultural processes in medieval Eurasia?

1.3. Significance of Study

This study is significant because it addresses the current problem of Turkology by addressing critical gaps in the study of Western Kipchak languages and their interactions with other linguistic and cultural systems. Despite the extensive scholarship on Turkic languages, the Armeno-Kipchak corpus remains underexplored in comparative studies, particularly regarding its interactions with other Turkic varieties. By analyzing patterns of lexical borrowing and cultural exchange between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages, this study provides: (1) insights into language contact: It identifies the mechanisms and dynamics of linguistic borrow-

ing, offering valuable data for understanding the evolution of Western Kipchak languages within the broader Turkic language family; (2) comparative frameworks: the findings contribute to refining comparative approaches in Turkology, facilitating a deeper understanding of the linguistic diversity and historical development of Kipchak languages; (3) historical contextualization: the research situates linguistic interactions within the medieval Eurasian socio-cultural landscape, shedding light on the historical processes that influenced Turkic language evolution. This study not only bridges a gap in the understanding of Armeno-Kipchak's linguistic and cultural significance but also enriches Turkological scholarship by expanding its scope to include underrepresented language interactions.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Terminological Framework

Understanding the key terms and their historical and cultural significance is essential for exploring the complex interactions between languages and cultures in medieval Eurasia. This section defines and contextualizes pivotal terms—Scythian, Tatar, and Kipchak—to provide clarity and establish a shared foundation for analyzing linguistic and cultural exchanges. By distinguishing these terms, the study highlights the unique roles each group played in shaping the historical and linguistic landscape of the region.

2.1.1. Scythian

The Scythians were an ancient nomadic Iranian-speaking people who existed from the 8th century BC to the 4th century AD. The Scythians did not have a written language; more than two hundred words are known from the Scythian language, as well as personal names, toponyms and glosses in ancient and cuneiform sources^[25]. Here are some key points about them:

1. **Culture and Society:** The Scythians were part of a larger group of nomadic peoples who inhabited the vast Eurasian steppes between the Black Sea and Central Asia. Their society was largely based on a nomadic lifestyle, with a strong emphasis on horseback riding and archery. They lived in portable, felt-covered, tent-like houses known as yurts, and their economy was based on herding, hunting and raiding.

2. **Warrior Skills:** Scythian warriors were renowned for their skill at mounted archery. They used complex composite bows that were very effective due to their power and range. Their fighting techniques allowed them to shoot arrows accurately while riding at high speed, making them formidable opponents for all armies of the time.
3. **Armor and Weapons:** They wore light armor, often made of leather and metal, which allowed for mobility. Their armament included short swords—akinakes, a spear with a metal tip, and sometimes battle axes. The Scythians were also known for their distinctive, intricate art and jewelry, including elaborate gold work and animal motifs.
4. **Burial Practices:** The Scythians had elaborate burial practices, often burying their dead in large kurgans (burial mounds) accompanied by a wealth of grave goods, including weapons, jewelry and sometimes even horses. These graves provide valuable archaeological information about their culture and social structure.
5. **Historical Influence:** The Scythians interacted with several major ancient civilizations, including the Greeks, Persians, and Romans. They were often seen as a threat by their neighbors due to their raids and wars. Despite this, they exerted a significant cultural influence and contributed to the spread of certain technologies and ideas throughout Eurasia. Their unique combination of martial prowess and nomadic lifestyle makes them a fascinating subject for the study of ancient history and military tactics^[26].

2.1.2. Tatar

Tatars is an ethnonym, the name of some Turkic-speaking tribes of the Eastern Turkic Khaganate, known since the 8th century from the tombstones on the graves of the Khaganate's leaders. These tribes are known under the names "Tokuz-Tatar" ("Nine Tatars") and "Otuz-Tatar" ("Thirty Tatars"). Tatars are also mentioned in Chinese sources of the 9th century in the forms da-da, ta-ta, and tan-tan. In the Persian work of the 10th century "Khudud al-alam," the Tatars are named as one of the clans of the Tokuz-Oguz—the population of the Karakhanid state formed after the collapse of the Western Turkic Khaganate^[27].

The Tatars are also known from sources from the 11th century. Thus, Mahmud Kashgari names the Tatar tribe among 20 Turkic tribes, and al-Gardisi cites a legend from the history of the formation of the Kimak Khaganate, according to which people from the Tatar tribe played a significant role in it.

During the creation of the Turkic Khaganate, the Tatars already played a significant role in the Turks' relations with the Chinese Empire. In the 8th century, the Tatars were mentioned in sources as a union of tribes. The Tatars were initially one of the active historical subjects participating in the formation of the Turkic people.

The adoption of Islam in 922 and the development of the Great Volga Route became turning points in the history of the Tatars. Thanks to Islam, the ancestors of the Tatars were included in the most advanced Muslim world of its time, which determined the future of the people and its civilizational features. The Islamic world itself, thanks to the Bulgars, advanced to the northernmost latitude, which remains an important factor to this day. In the 12th century, the Tatars began to play a significant role in the movement that arose in the steppes of Central Asia during the formation of the Mongol Empire. Gradually, the word "Tatars" began to be used to designate the Turkic-speaking population of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Western Siberia; at the same time, it became most widespread in the western regions—in the Volga region and in the adjacent areas.

The most powerful Turkic state after the collapse of the Golden Horde in the Volga region was the Kazan Khanate, Russia's closest eastern neighbor, which, according to old tradition, was accepted as Tatar. The cultural core of Tatar history after the capture of Kazan in 1552 was preserved primarily thanks to Islam. It became a form of cultural survival, a banner of struggle against Christianization and assimilation of the Tatars^[28].

2.1.3. Kipchak

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the ethnonym Kipchaks, however, was used quite consistently as identical to the ethnonym Tatars. Armenian authors invested a wide variety of meanings into the ethnonym Kipchaks. This ethnonym is known in several phonetic variants (Kipchak, Kyfchak, Kyvchak, Kypshak, Kypchakh, Hypchakh, Hybchakh, Khpchakh, Khbchakh). The Kipchaks are a Mongoloid, mainly Turkic-speaking people. They are one of the branches of the Western Turkites ("Blue Turks"). These people consisted of two independent tribes and dominated the territory from Balkhash to the Irtysh. Under this name, they became known from Arabic manuscripts. In the second half of the 11th century, on the northern shores of the Black Sea, the Kipchaks united with the Pechenegs and Uzes who remained there.

From that time on, in Russian chronicles, the Kipchaks are called Polovtsians. This name is associated with the straw-white hair of the Kipchaks." In Europe they were called Cumans (Komans); in Hungary, Kuns^[29].

At the turn of the 10th and 11th centuries, the Kipchaks gained independence. The Kipchaks were numerous and very strong. Their main occupation was nomadic cattle breeding. From the second quarter of the 10th century, they began farming. The nomads lived in yurts. In winter, they set up camps on the banks of rivers. By the end of the 11th—beginning of the 12th century, the Kipchaks occupied the territory from Lake Balkhash to the Danube. In Arabic sources, it is called Dasht-i Kipchak. All tribes living in the Great Steppe—Dasht-i-Kipchak (historical region of Eurasia, representing the territory from the lower Danube to the Irtysh and Lake Balkhash)—considered themselves Kipchaks.

At the end of the 13th—beginning of the 14th century, when the Kipchak language had already grown to the level of koine, an international language. The powerful Kipchak traditions and culture absorbed the spirituality of all other steppe ethnic groups, and the term "Kipchak" again spread throughout the entire territory of Desht-i-Kipchak. However, the ethnic development of the Kipchaks no longer followed the course of the formation of the Kipchak nationality itself, but along the line of the participation of the Kipchaks in the formation of a number of Turkic-speaking peoples.

The Kipchak language belongs to the Kipchak-Polovtsian subgroup of the Kipchak group of Turkic languages. In the phonetic structure, it is characterized by the instability of the correspondences s/sh in words such as *таc/таш*—"stone," "the predominant use of "y" at the beginning of a word instead of ж/ж, in other languages, in the grammatical structure—the parallel use of participle forms in *-yp/-ÿp* and *-ap/-ep*, the activation of names of action in *-мак/-мек* instead of the form in *-ÿÿ/-ÿÿÿ*, etc., as well as the presence of Oghuz vocabulary. Information about the language of the Cumans, or Polovtsians, of the pre-Mongol era (11th—first half of the 13th centuries) is provided by the "Dictionary of Turkic Dialects" by Mahmud Kashgarsky. More significant monuments of the Kipchak language date back to the post-Mongol era (second half of the 13th to 16th centuries). The largest monument of the Kipchak language is the Latin-Persian-Cuman dictionary of the late 13th century, "Codex Cumanicus" (published by T. Klapproth in 1828)^[30].

2.2. Chronological Evolution of the Armeno-Kipchak Script

2.2.1. Pre-Literate Period (Late 13th–15th Centuries)

The Mongol movement to the West led to the emergence of a new large migration of peoples—with all the ensuing consequences also in the linguistic situation of Eurasia. The Mongol attack on Transcaucasia erupted from there, a powerful wave of Armenian migration, which also rushed to the North, to Eastern Europe. The spoken and written language of both old and new settlers was Armenian^[31].

In the late 13th–early 14th centuries, linguistic assimilation towards a common contact language, which turned out to be Tatar, took place in the territories under the control of the Mongol-Tatars. The Armenians intensively adopted the Tatar language in the 14th–15th centuries. Gradual linguistic assimilation towards Kipchakization took place both in Crimea and in the Volga and Dniester regions. The initial stage consisted of the Armenians adopting as a spoken language the language that was dominant in the Golden Horde and later in the Crimean Khanate, i.e., Tatar (Crimean Tatar). As is usual in such cases, the language of the Kylchakophone Armenians was hardly identical to the language of the Crimean Tatars. The difference should have been especially evident in the area of vocabulary, where, one can assume, a certain number of Armenian words were preserved, reflecting the specifics of everyday life, occupations, and religion. If the original dialect of the Turkic-speaking Armenians can be viewed as a unique “ethnographic” dialect of the Tatar language (i.e., a dialect that functioned within the Armenian community, ethnically alien to the Tatars), then later, during the transformation of the unwritten dialect into the language of significant literature of various genres, this Turkic language, in its structure and composition, was enriched with new features that differentiated it from the Crimean

Tatar. But this happened already at the next stage of development—in the absence of a Turkic environment and its replacement by another, Slavic one^[32].

2.2.2. The Emergence of Written Language and Its Flourishing (16th–First Half of the 17th Centuries)

The Armenians of Ukraine were in constant contact with their fellow tribesmen in the Black Sea region. Micro-migrations from the Volga region, Crimea, and possibly Transnistria gradually increased the share of Kipchak-phones in the colonies. At first, it was a language used for contacts during trade activities in the spaces of Europe, and later—a spoken language among ethnic Armenian settlers. In 1521, the 16th century, the community’s records were switched from Armenian to Armenian-Kipchak: in the book of the Lviv Armenian court, the last entry in Armenian is dated March 12, 1521, and the first in Kipchak is dated August 26, 1521. In 1528, an Armenian-Kipchak translation of the Lviv Code of Laws, the code of Armenian rights, was prepared. In 1530 or a few years later, the “Chronicle of Poland” was compiled; in 1537 or immediately after it, the so-called “Venetian Chronicle” was written—both in Armenian-Kipchak^[33].

2.2.3. Decline of the Language (Second Half of the 17th Century)

Armenian-Kipchak manuscripts apparently did not go beyond the 60s of the 16th century. The last prominent author who preserved the Armenian-Kipchak language in his literary work was Vardapet Anton; a three-volume collection of his sermons was compiled in 1600–1662. In the third quarter of the 17th century, the official status of the Armenian-Kipchak language basically ceased to exist^[34].

The stages of the Armeno-Kipchak language’s rise and decline are shown in **Table 1** and **Figure 1**.

Table 1. The stages of the Armenian Kipchak language’s rise and decline.

Stages	Description	Language Use
16th century (20–30 years)	Migration of Armenians, flourishing of the language	High
1521	Paperwork	Very High
1559–1567 years	Creation of literary and legal texts	Very High
1618	Printing	Very High
1600–1662 years	Gradual decline in use	Very High
1670	Assimilation, transition to other languages	Average
17th century	Disappearance of the language	Low

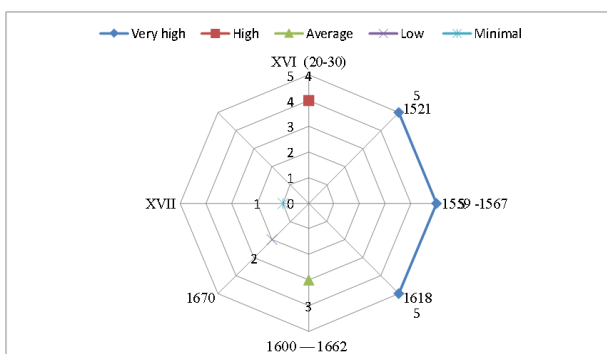


Figure 1. The Stages of the Armeno-Kipchak Language’s Rise and Decline.

2.3. Challenges in Ethnonym Classification

The inconsistent use and classification of ethnonyms in historical and linguistic studies pose significant challenges for researchers examining cultural and linguistic interactions. Current classification schemes, such as those used in ethno-linguistics, historical ethnography, and anthropology, provide valuable but often fragmented perspectives. For instance:

Ethnolinguistic Approaches: Classify ethnonyms based on language families (e.g., Indo-European, Turkic) and their geographical spread.

Historical Ethnography: Focuses on the socio-political roles and migrations of groups, such as the Kipchak-Cuman confederation or the Tatar confederations during the Mongol era.

Anthropological Classifications: Examine cultural practices and shared traditions, providing a cross-cultural perspective on the development of ethnonyms.

Despite these efforts, the lack of a unified framework leads to overlapping or contradictory interpretations. For example, terms like “Tatar” and “Kipchak” have been used interchangeably in some contexts, while in others, they represent distinct groups with unique identities. To address this issue, a unified approach to ethnonymy could integrate linguistic, historical, and cultural data into a multi-dimensional classification system. This system might include:

1. **Chronological Layers:** Identifying the historical periods during which ethnonyms emerged and evolved.
2. **Linguistic Markers:** Categorizing ethnonyms based on linguistic shifts and borrowing patterns.
3. **Cultural Interactions:** Mapping the influences of trade, migration, and conflict on the formation and adoption of ethnonyms^[35, 36].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, focusing on the comparative analysis of linguistic and cultural features in historical texts. A qualitative approach is appropriate because it allows for an in-depth exploration of language contact phenomena, including lexical borrowing and cultural influence, within the medieval Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic context. The choice of methods aligns with the study’s objective to identify patterns of interaction between Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages and their cultural components. A qualitative design enables a detailed contextual analysis of the data, capturing the nuanced interplay between linguistic and cultural elements.

3.2. Data Collection

The primary data for this study were sourced from a corpus of 30 medieval Armeno-Kipchak manuscripts, inscriptions, and legal documents. These texts were selected based on their linguistic relevance, historical significance, and availability in academic archives. The corpus includes texts written in the Armeno-Kipchak script, which document various aspects of social, religious, and legal life, providing a rich context for analyzing lexical and cultural exchanges.

Although this study does not involve human participants directly, it incorporates the linguistic data of medieval Kipchak-speaking Armenian communities. These communities were identified through historical records as bilingual or multilingual, engaging actively with Turkic-speaking populations.

A purposive sampling approach was employed to ensure the inclusion of texts that explicitly demonstrate interaction between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic linguistic systems. The selected sample consists of lexical items and phrases found in at least three distinct sources to validate their occurrence as genuine borrowings or shared linguistic features.

3.3. Research Process and Methods

The research comprises several consecutive stages, as shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Stages of research and associated methods.

Stage	Description	Methods
Defining Objectives and Goals	Identifying the primary research questions, goals, and key areas of investigation	Literature review, expert consultations
Data Collection	Gathering a corpus of historical texts, documents, chronicles, and Armeno-Kipchak monuments	Corpus linguistics, archival research
Lexical Analysis	Examining lexical borrowings and their contextual usage within the historical and cultural framework	Comparative vocabulary analysis, contextual linguistic analysis
Cultural and Historical Context Analysis	Investigating historical events and cultural interactions influencing language development	Contextual analysis, historical research
Discussion of Results	Interpreting the analyzed data and deriving conclusions about linguistic and cultural exchanges	Comparative and contextual analysis

4. Results

4.1. Results of on Lexical Borrowing and Cultural Exchange

The analysis of lexical borrowings between Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages revealed significant insights into the nature of cultural and linguistic exchange during the medieval period. The findings are categorized into thematic areas, reflecting both linguistic patterns and their cultural implications (see **Table 3**).

The lexical borrowings demonstrate a dynamic interplay of power, culture, and daily life between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic-speaking communities. The findings emphasize how historical circumstances, such as political dominance, trade relations, and religious interactions, shaped language contact. By examining these borrowings, the study reconstructs not only linguistic changes but also the sociocultural processes underlying medieval Eurasian interactions.

(1) Lexical Categories

Nouns: These represent the majority of borrowings

and include terms related to governance (bey, khan), trade (bazaar), and religion (imam, dua). Nouns were emphasized as they often directly relate to cultural and societal needs, making them more likely to be borrowed during interaction.

Verbs: Although less frequently borrowed, verbs demonstrate influence in action-related terminologies that reflect shared activities or technologies.

Adjectives and Other Categories: These are analyzed to a lesser extent but provide insight into descriptive language borrowed from Turkic into Armeno-Kipchak or vice versa.

(2) Cultural Terminologies

Terms like yurt (homeland) and tamga (seal) reflect deep cultural integration. These terminologies are directly linked to nomadic lifestyles, trade, and administrative practices, illustrating how language embodies shared cultural elements.

(3) Historical Relevance

The analysis connects lexical borrowings to historical contexts such as the Mongol conquests and the Silk Road, which facilitated cross-cultural interaction and language exchange.

Table 3. Lexical Borrowings and Cultural Influences in Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic Interactions.

Category	Examples	Description and Findings
Governance and Administration	բէյ (bēy - lord), խան (xan - leader)	Reflects Turkic influence in political structures; commonly used in administrative contexts.
Trade and Economy	պազար (bazar - market), թամգա (tamga - seal)	Highlights the importance of commerce as a conduit for linguistic exchange.
Religion and Spirituality	իմամ (imam - priest), դուա (dua - prayer)	Borrowings indicate intercultural religious dialogue and influence between Muslim and Christian traditions.
Morphological Adaptations	քիտապ → քիտապէ (kitap → kitabe - book)	Phonetic adjustments to align with Armeno-Kipchak linguistic structures.
Semantic Shifts	իւրթ (yurt - homeland), աթ (at - horse)	Semantic adaptations reflect cultural reinterpretations, e.g., yurt gaining community connotations.
Cultural Syncretism	Bidirectional borrowings	Turkic dominance seen in governance terms; Armenian influence in liturgical vocabulary.
Historical Factors	Mongol conquests, Silk Road	Key events like the Mongol era and shared trade routes facilitated extensive language contact.

The lexical analysis’s findings indicate that the number of borrowings between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages has increased significantly during specific historical eras. The Mongol conquests and the growth of the Great Silk Road, which linked the East and the West, occurred during this time. A vigorous vocabulary exchange was facilitated by active trade, diplomatic ties, and population migration. Due to the close contact between the Turkic and Armeno-Kipchak peoples during this period, both vocabulary and

cultural ideas were borrowed (see **Table 4**).

The analysis of lexical borrowings allows us to conclude that the linguistic interaction between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages was multifaceted, not limited to language contacts. It was integral to broader historical, cultural, and social processes. Language evolution in the context of multilayered cultural and historical interactions provides a unique opportunity to study and reconstruct the region’s social and cultural history.

Table 4. Results of contextual analysis of lexical borrowings

Historical/Cultural Context	Type of Borrowing	Borrowed Words	Social and Cultural Factors
Trade routes	մալ (<i>mal</i>) - material values, livestock, goods. բազար (<i>bazar</i>) - place of trade, market. թելնգէ (<i>teñge</i>) - money or measure of value. սառնիս (<i>sauda</i>) - commerce, trade in goods or services. սոռնր (<i>nesie, qaryz</i>) - loan, debt. ջրացիս (<i>qarjylyk esepeteu, jospap</i>) - financial calculation or plan. օշնր (<i>tabystan alynatyn salyk, edette zatmay</i>) - A tax levied on income, usually in kind. սարրաֆ (<i>ayyrbastauшы, bankir</i>) - A term used to describe a person who deals in currency exchange or lending. թուխում (<i>kapital, muragerlik</i>) - the basis for the growth of wealth, capital. քու (<i>qazyına, qoyma</i>) - state or private treasury, money storage.	Borrowings are associated with growing trade and exchange of cultural knowledge	Development of the Great Silk Road, exchange of goods and technologies between East and West
Military conflicts	բրնը (<i>qylysh</i>) – falchion նայզա (<i>найза</i>) – spear շայրաս (<i>шайқас</i>) – battle ջասաղ (<i>жасақ, әскер</i>) – detachment, army սалт атты (<i>салт атты</i>) – horseman жорық (<i>жорық</i>) – hike бекініс (<i>бекініс</i>) – fortress тұтқын (<i>тұтқын</i>) – captive	Terms related to weapons, strategies	Migration of peoples, attacks and military campaigns
Migration of peoples	այмақ (<i>аймақ</i>) – region, district թոյ (<i>той</i>) – holiday դուս (<i>құда</i>) – matchmaker хлыс (<i>хлыс</i>) – people, tribe жұрт (<i>жұрт</i>) – settlement, community	Borrowings are caused by contacts between people in the process of migration	Migration of peoples and ethnic mixing during the period of great migrations of peoples
Religious contacts	թէնիր (<i>тәңір</i>) – god, sky жұма (<i>жұма</i>) – Friday (day of prayer) мешит (<i>мешит</i>) – mosque	Terms related to religion and worship	The spread of Islam and Christianity and contact between Armenian and Turkic peoples through religious missions
Diplomatic relations	хан (<i>хан</i>) – ruler, king бу (<i>бу</i>) – judge, adviser	Words concerning the state, rulers and diplomacy	Permanent diplomatic relations between the Armenian and Turkic states

4.2. Patterns of Borrowing: Identification and Categorization

Table 5 shows the frequency analysis of lexical borrowings.

The analysis of lexical borrowings reveals patterns of

language exchange intricately tied to cultural and historical interactions. The distribution of borrowings across high, moderate, and low-frequency categories provides insights into the societal domains where these exchanges were most impactful.

Table 5. Frequency-based categorization of lexical borrowings.

Frequency Category	Examples	Cultural Domain	Historical Relevance	Observations
High-Frequency	իմամ (imam - priest), դուա (dua - prayer) բէյ (bēy - lord), խան (xan - leader) պազար (bazar - market),	Religion, Trade, Governance	Strong during periods of cultural integration (e.g., Silk Road era)	Indicates domains of intense interaction; essential societal terms fully adopted.
Moderate-Frequency	քիտապ → քիտաբէ (kitap → kitabe -book), թամգա (tamga - seal)	Education, Trade	Reflects intellectual exchanges in shared cultural hubs	Adapted terms demonstrate integration of scholarly and practical knowledge.
Low-Frequency	իւրթ (yurt - homeland), ատ (at - horse)	Nomadic Culture, Daily Life	Highlighted during the Mongol conquests and Turkic migrations	Limited but meaningful borrowing tied to specific cultural or technological practices.

Terms like բէյ (bēy - lord), խան (xan - leader) թամգա (tamga - seal) dominate the corpus, highlighting their critical role in religious, administrative, and economic interactions. These words are indicative of deep cultural integration and societal reliance on shared practices. For instance, the prominence of religious terminology (իմամ (imam - priest), դուա (dua - prayer) underscores the influence of shared spiritual and cultural traditions, particularly during periods of religious coexistence and trade along the Silk Road. Similarly, terms like պազար (bazar - market), reflect the pivotal role of commerce in fostering linguistic and cultural exchange.

Moderately frequent terms such as քիտապ → քիտաբէ (kitap → kitabe -book) and թամգա (tamga - seal) suggest a focus on intellectual and trade exchanges. The adaptation of kitap to kitabe within the Armeno-Kipchak lexicon reflects linguistic accommodation, showcasing the dynamic evolution of shared educational and commercial terminologies. These borrowings often signify intercultural collaboration in scholarly endeavors and bureaucratic practices.

Words like իւրթ (yurt - homeland) and ատ (at - horse) occur less frequently but retain significant cultural value. These terms point to the nomadic and pastoral traditions central to Turkic societies, which influenced the Armeno-Kipchak lexicon during the Mongol conquests and Turkic migrations. The limited use of such terms may reflect their specific cultural context or gradual assimilation into a more sedentary lifestyle.

The distribution of borrowings highlights language’s role as both a mirror and a mechanism of societal interaction. High-frequency borrowings represent domains of sustained and widespread interaction, such as religion and trade, where mutual dependence fostered linguistic integration. Moderate and low-frequency borrowings illustrate the selective assim-

ilation of cultural and technological innovations, pointing to focused exchanges in scholarly, administrative, and lifestyle practices.

5. Discussion

Our analysis contributes to the growing body of research on language contact, particularly in the context of the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic linguistic interactions during the medieval period^[1-4]. The findings confirm existing theories regarding the significance of religion and trade in shaping linguistic borrowing, as highlighted by prior studies in contact linguistics^[8, 9, 13, 16]. However, the results also challenge the underrepresentation of governance-related terms in earlier research, suggesting that political integration played a more substantial role than previously recognized. This study expands the understanding of the bidirectional nature of borrowings, particularly through its emphasis on frequency distributions and their alignment with historical events, such as the Silk Road’s impact on linguistic exchange^[37]. The study identified distinct patterns of lexical borrowing within semantic categories, such as religion, trade, and governance, and highlighted the historical and cultural factors underpinning these patterns. The study revealed a higher-than-anticipated frequency of borrowings in the trade domain, reflecting the pivotal role of economic interactions. This study reinforces the significance of semantic domain analysis in understanding language contact. The results validate using frequency analysis and historical semantics as tools for contextualizing borrowings. The insights gained may influence educational curricula, emphasizing the role of language as a cultural marker. Additionally, the study highlights the need to preserve multilingual corpora for future research.

Limitations

While the study successfully identified patterns of borrowing, it faced the following limitations. **Sample Size:** The corpus analyzed may not fully represent all possible texts or inscriptions from the period. **Temporal Scope:** Borrowings from later periods were excluded, potentially overlooking long-term linguistic dynamics. **Methodological Constraints:** Reliance on existing corpora limits the ability to explore undocumented language usage. These limitations suggest caution when generalizing the findings beyond the specific historical and linguistic context studied. To address the limitations and build upon this study's findings, future research could: Expand the corpus to include additional texts, covering a broader geographic and temporal scope. Investigate the influence of less-represented domains, such as agriculture or craftsmanship, on lexical borrowing. Apply advanced computational methods, such as network analysis, to trace relationships among borrowed terms across languages. Explore the sociolinguistic factors, including the roles of bilingual speakers and elite communities, in facilitating borrowing. By addressing these areas, future studies can deepen our understanding of the dynamics of Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic language interactions.

6. Conclusions

This study has identified distinct patterns of lexical borrowing between the Armeno-Kipchak and Turkic languages, particularly in domains such as religion, trade, and governance. High-frequency borrowings in religious and administrative lexicon underscore the pivotal role of these cultural domains in shaping linguistic exchange. The analysis also revealed evidence of bidirectional borrowing, indicating mutual cultural and linguistic influence, which is aligned with the historical context of medieval Eurasian interactions. Cultural, historical, and social factors, including the Mongol conquests and the Silk Road's commercial activities, were shown to be significant drivers of these exchanges. These findings contribute to the understanding of language as a marker of societal interaction and adaptation, enriching the field of historical linguistics and Turkology. The results provide a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of linguistic and cultural evolution in medieval Eurasia. The findings have practical implications for recon-

structing historical narratives and enhancing comparative linguistic methodologies. This research not only highlights the enduring influence of cultural and linguistic exchange in shaping civilizations but also sets the stage for further studies on underexplored areas of historical linguistics. Understanding these interactions offers valuable insights into the complexities of human communication and cultural integration, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in unveiling the past.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, A.S. and R.A.; methodology, Z.I.; software, G.M.; validation, R.K., B.Z. and M.N.; formal analysis, A.S.; investigation, R.A.; resources, Z.I.; data curation, G.M.; writing—original draft preparation, R.K.; writing—review and editing, B.Z.; visualization, M.N.; supervision, A.S.; project administration, R.A.; funding acquisition, Z.I. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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