Etymological Notes on Yakut Color Terms

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Abstract

The goal of the paper is to analyze Yakut color terms from an etymological perspective. In all, fifty-one color terms have been collected from different Yakut dictionaries and electronic sources. The terms show a heterogeneous picture: the basic color terms are of Common Turkic origin (e.g. küöx ‘blue’, qara ‘black’, kiihil ‘red’) representing the archaic features, some basic color terms are absent in other Modern Turkic languages due to internal developments involving special Turkic or specifically Yakut suffixes (e.g. saharxay ‘yellow’, kitarxay ‘red’). The largest group of Yakut color terms includes Mongolic loanwords, most of which are connected to the colors of animals (especially horses), which prove the Mongolic influence on the Yakut lifestyle. Another part of the paper considers the special suffixes in Yakut forming adjectives designating shades of colors, which have a mixed, i.e. Turkic and Mongolic origin. The paper tries to shed light on the way color terms may play in determining the place of the Yakut language among the Turkic languages.

Keywords

Yakut – Mongolic loanwords – etymology – color terms – derivation

In memoriam Professor Claus Schönig
1 Introduction

1.1 Studies on Yakut Color Terms

Color terms in Turkic languages were examined in detail in the famous work by Laude-Cirtautas (1961). She divided the color-terms into two groups, namely, the group of summarizing color-terms\(^1\) and object color terms.\(^2\) She collected some of the historical and modern occurrences of these words, including in Yakut, as well as words derived from them. Also, she investigated the shades of meaning of color terms, which she divided into two groups: first, the primary shades, and then the group of abstract meanings. This monograph is the most important publication for studies on color terms in Turkic languages.

In 2010, an interesting paper about Yakut\(^3\) word \textit{sahil} ‘fox’ was published by Stachowski. He connected the Yakut word with the Turkic color term \textit{yašil} ‘green’ (cf. Turkish \textit{yeşil}). According to him, the Yakut word for ‘fox’ changed according to the model ‘green’ → ‘red’ → ‘golden’ → ‘yellow’. The paper shows how color terms specifically developed in the Yakut language.


In her dissertation, Gabyševa devoted a chapter to color names, dealing with the role of color terms in Yakut culture (Gabyševa 2003: 96–271). The peculiarities of horse naming in Yakut and the problems of translating them into Russian and French were studied by Borisova (2013).

2 Yakut Color Terms

From an etymological point of view, Yakut color terms show a mixed picture. Eleven of them are inherited from Turkic, whereas five of them independently

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1 This means that their use is not limited, they can be used for anything in everyday life.
2 This means that their use is limited.
3 The Yakuts have a special place among Turkic people from a geographical aspect: they live isolated from other Turkic people. Their language shows at least two migration waves of Turkic groups which left their traces in its phonetics, the older Mongolic and the later Russian influence, and an impact of Tungusic and Yeniseian substrate languages (Stachowski & Menz 1998: 416). According to the classification of the Turkic languages (Johanson 1998: 83), the Yakut language belongs in the North Siberian group with Dolgan, and it has some distinct grammatical features that distinguish it from all other Turkic languages, e.g. the preservation of original long vowels, the shift *V\(\ddagger\)V > VV (e.g. Yakut \textit{atax} < *\textit{aδaq} ‘leg’), the disappearance of the initial *s- (e.g. Yakut \textit{sän} < *\textit{sän} ‘you’), the changing of the initial *y- > s-, the loss of the Turkic locative, and the emergence of new cases, etc.
developed in Yakut. Fifteen Yakut color terms were borrowed from Mongolic, where ten of them are connected to the colors of animals—which proves the enormous Mongolic influence on the Yakut lifestyle. And only one color term, *oruosabay* ‘pink’ is of Russian (*розовый* ‘pink’) origin.

### 2.1 The Color Terms of Turkic Origin

1. The most basic color terms in Yakut are of Turkic origin:

   - Yakut *kïhïl* ‘red’⁴ (Slepcov 213a) ~ Turkic:⁵ cf. Old Turkic *qïzïl* ‘red’;⁶
   - Yakut *küöx* ‘blue’ (Slepcov 200a) ~ Turkic:⁷ cf. Old Turkic *kȫk* ‘sky colored, blue, blue-grey’;
   - Yakut *ürüŋ* ‘white’⁸ (Slepcov 457b) ~ Turkic:⁹ cf. Old Turkic *ürüŋ* ‘white’;
   - Yakut *xara* ‘black’¹⁰ (Slepcov 481b) ~ Turkic:¹¹ cf. Old Turkic *qara* ‘black’.  

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⁴ Cf. Yakut *kïhïl xaptaġas* ‘red currant’, *kïhïl kömüs* ‘red gold’, *kïhïl oġo* ‘baby, newborn child’, etc. Cf. also Yakut *kïhïllā*- (< *kïhïl*+lĀ- {Yakut denominal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 218}) ‘to redden; to drink red wine’.  
⁵ For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 50–56), Doerfer (TMEN 3: 469–470), Räsänen (VEWT 269a), Clauson (ED 681a, 689b), SIGTJa (2001: 602–603) and ESTJa (2000: 194–196).  
⁶ *qïzïl* < *qïz*- ‘to be red’ -ll {Turkic VN/Adj.: Clauson ED xliv}; cf. Yakut *qïs*- ‘to be red; to turn purple’.  
⁷ For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 77–85), Räsänen (VEWT 287), Doerfer (TMEN 3: 640–642), Clauson (ED 708b), Sevortjan (3: 66–68) and SIGTJa (2001: 60, 604).  
⁸ Cf. Yakut *ürüŋ kümäği* ‘white paper’, *ürüŋ bïlït* ‘white clouds’, *ürüŋ tǖn* ‘White Nights’; *ürüŋ* as ‘dairy produce, milk products’ (Pekarskij 3: 3178–3179), etc.  
⁹ I agree with Vovin’s opinion that the word should be a loanword in Turkic due to the limited widespread. Possibly, the word was borrowed from the language X, which may connected to Ruan-ruan (for more details, see Vovin 2010: 30–31). Given the Khalaj form *hürün* the reconstructed Proto-Turkic form is *hürüŋ*. The word presents in Karakhanid-Uyghur *ürüŋ* ‘white’, Dolgan *ürüŋ* ‘white’, Anatolian Turkish *ürün* ‘milk, yogurt’, in other Turkic languages traces of *āq*. For etymology, see Clauson (ED 233b), Stachowski (1993: 253), SIGTJa (2001: 301) and Vovin (2010: 30–31).  
¹⁰ Cf. Yakut *xara öŋ* ‘black color’, *xara ït* ‘black dog’, *xara bïlït* ‘black cloud’; further derivations: *xărâr*- (< xara+Ar- {Yakut nominal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 219–220}) ‘to become black’, *xarâlâ*- (< xara+lĀ- {Yakut nominal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 217}) ‘to cover by something black’.  
Only two special color terms connected to the color of horses are of Turkic origin:

Yakut ala ‘dappled, spotted, with white spots (color of horse)’ (Slepcov 36b) ~ Turkic:12 cf. Old Turkic āla ‘parti-colored, dappled, mottled, spotted, blotchy’;

Yakut xoŋor ‘light bay, brown’ (Slepcov 498b) ~ Turkic:13 cf. Old Turkic qoŋur ‘dark chestnut (of a horse’s coat)’.

2. A separate group includes the derived color terms of Turkic origin but developed internally in Yakut:

Color terms with the Turkic denominal noun suffix +Xš which forms names designating slight shades of colors (for details on function, see Erdal 1991: 102–103):

Yakut araɣas ~ aranja ‘yellowish; reddish’14 (Slepcov 44b) < *səriği +Xš ~ Turkic:15 cf. Old Turkic sariği ‘yellow’ (> Yakut ariği ‘butter’);

Yakut kuɣa ‘red (of a horse)’ (Pekarskij 1191) < *quba +Xš ~ Turkic:16 cf. Old Turkic quba ‘pale, pale yellow, pale grey’;

Yakut turaɣa ‘bay (of a horse)’ (Slepcov 406a) < *turaği +Xš ~ Turkic:17 cf. Old Turkic toruği ‘bay (of a horse)’.

12 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 70–76), ESTJa (1974: 129), Doerfer (TMEN 2: 95–97), Räsänen (VEWT 15a), Clauson (ED 126a) and SIGTJa (2001: 607–608).


15 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 64–68), Doerfer (TMEN 3: 220–221), Räsänen (VEWT 403b), Clauson (ED 848a), SIGTJa (2001: 601) and ESTJa (2003: 206–208).


17 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 196), Räsänen (VEWT 489b), Doerfer (TMEN 2: 475–477) and Clauson (ED 538a).
There is one case when the Turkic word was borrowed in Yakut via Russian:

Yakut čālay ‘blue, bluish’ (Slepcov 505b) ← Russian чалый ‘grey’ ← Turkic: cf. Old Turkic čal ‘of a mixed black and white color; grey (hair)’.

There are the color terms with their own Yakut suffixes (for details on the suffixes, see below under Derivation of color terms in Yakut):

Yakut kubağay ‘pale, light’ (Slepcov 184b) < *quba +GAy {Yakut denominal noun suffix forming adjectives} ~ Turkic: cf. Old Turkic quba ‘pale, pale yellow, pale grey’;21

Yakut kïtarxay ‘red, ruddy’ (Pekarskij 1444; Slepcov 214a) < *kït +(A)rKAy {Yakut denominal noun suffix forming adjectives}, cf. kïtar- (< *kït+Ar- {Yakut denominal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 219}) ‘to be red’ ~ Turkic22 *qïz: cf. Old Turkic qïzar- ‘to be or become red’, qïzïl ‘red’;

Yakut sahâr xay ‘yellow; brown (eyes), blond (hair)’ (Slepcov 318b) < *sah +(A)rKAy {Yakut denominal noun suffix forming adjectives} cf. sahar- ‘to become yellow’ ~ Turkic *yaš ‘green’:23 cf. Old Turkic yaš ‘fresh, moist, green vegetables’.

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18 Cf. Yakut čālay tīŋ ‘blue squirrel’, čālay soloydo ‘blue weasel’ (Pekarskij 3558), küux čālay xalalan ‘blue sky’ (Slepcov 505b).

19 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 97–98), Doerfer (TMEN 3: 31), Rässänen (VWET 96b), Clauson (ED 417a).

20 Cf. Yakut kubağay köğörkoy ‘pale blue’, kubağay arağas ‘pale yellow’, kubağay kïhïl ‘pale red’, etc.

21 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 95–97), Rässänen (VWET 295a), Clauson (ED 581a) and ESTJa (2000: 94–96).

22 For the etymological background, see Clauson (ED 685a), Stachowski (1993: 94).

23 Cf. Turkic *yašïl ‘green’ < *yašsïl < *yāš +sIl {Turkic denominal noun suffix forming adjectives}, Old Turkic yašïl; Turkish yešil; Tuvan čažïl ‘orpin’ ~ Yakut sahïl ‘fox’ (Stachowski 2010: 539–540).

2.2 *The Color Terms of Mongolic Origin*

1. There are two basic color terms of Mongolic origin:

Yakut boroŋ ‘grey, brown’<sup>25</sup> (<Slepcov 75b>) ← Mongolic<sup>28</sup> *boro ‘grey, brown; dark, swarthy (face); plain, simple’: cf. Literary Mongolian boro ~ bora (Rassadin 1980: 72) ← Bulghar Turkic *börö ‘grey’: cf. Old Turkic böz;<sup>29</sup>

Yakut kürün ~ küräŋ ‘brown’ (<Slepcov 201) ← Mongolic<sup>30</sup> *küreŋ<sup>31</sup> ‘dark brown, maroon (of fur); deep violet’: Literary Mongolian küreng (Kaluzynski 1962: 54, 7, 110).

2. There are two Mongolic loanwords denoting shades of darkness and lightness:

Yakut barān ‘dark, black’ (<Pekarskij 372>) ← Mongolic<sup>32</sup> *barān ‘dark, dark-brown’ < baraya<sup>33</sup>+ {Mongolic nominal noun suffix}: Literary Mongolian barayant (Kaluzynski 1962: 40; Rassadin 1980: 72);

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<sup>25</sup> Yakut → Tungusic: Ewenki (Tokko, Uchur, Chulman, Aldan, Maja, Sakhalin, Urmı) boroŋ ‘grey, brown; whitish’ (Khabtagaeva 2011: 103).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. another Yakut verb boloruy- ‘to become grey’ where metathesis occurred and goes back to the Mongolic verb borola- (< *boro ‘grey’ + lA- {Mongolic denominal verbal suffix, see Poppe GWM §245}) ‘to become grey’.

<sup>27</sup> E.g. Mongolic: Literary Mongolian γolumta ‘fireplace in a yurt’ → Yakut xolumtan; Mongolic: Literary Mongolian qayalya ‘gate, door’ → Yakut xalyan; Mongolic: Literary Mongolian sirqa ‘wound; sore’ → Yakut sîrγan; Mongolic: Literary Mongolian tayaburi ‘guess, riddle’ → Yakut tābïrïŋ; etc. (Khabtagaeva 2011: 103).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Middle Mongol: Secret History, Hua-yi yi-yu boro; Zhiyuan Vīyū buro; Mukaddimat al-Adab, Rasulid Hexaglot bora; Modern Mongol: Buryat bora; Onon Khamnigan bora; Dagur bor; Khalkha, Kalmuck bor (for more Mongolic data, see Nugteren 2011: 285).

<sup>29</sup> For more Turkic data and etymology, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: 86–93), Doerfer (TME 2: 335), Räsänen (VEWT 8b, 8a), Clausen (ED 388b), Sevortjan (2: 172) and SIGTJa (2002: 605–606).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Middle Mongol: Rasulid Hexaglot kuren; Modern Mongol: Buryat xüri(n); Onon Khamnigan kürin; Dagur xürin; Khalkha xüren; Oirat kürin ~ kürin.

<sup>31</sup> Mongolic → Modern Turkic: Tuvan xüreng ‘brown’ (Khabtagaeva 2001: 236).

<sup>32</sup> Middle Mongol: Secret History baruân; Modern Mongol: Buryat, Onon Khamnigan, Khalkha, Kalmuck barān.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Literary Mongolian barayaara- (< *baraya+rA-) ‘to be[come] or appear black or dark’, barayaqan (< *baraya+KAn) ‘blackish, dark’, barayala- (< *baraya+lA-) ‘to shade, make dark’, etc.
Yakut *däŋgir* ‘virid; transparent, clear, bright, light’\(^{34}\) (Slepcov 137b) ← Mongolic\(^{35}\) *čeŋkir*\(^{36}\) ‘light blue, bluish’ < *če+ngkir* {Mongolic denominal noun suffix, see Khabtagaeva 2001: 129\(^{37}\)}: Literary Mongolian čengkir – čengker (Kalużyński 1962: 46; 57).

3. An interesting case where the Mongolic horse term developed into a basic color term in Yakut:

Yakut *maŋan* ~ *maŋan* (Pekarskij 1523; Slepcov 235a) ‘white, whitish (horse, hair, cloud, house)’\(^{38}\) ← Mongolic\(^{39}\) *maŋqan* ‘horse with a star on its forehead’.\(^{40}\) Literary Mongolian mangqan, cf. mangqar ‘horse or cattle with a white head or face’ (Rassadin 1980: 72).

4. The greatest number of Mongolic loanwords are connected to color terms connected to animals, especially horses, e.g.

Yakut *äriän* ‘mottled, multicolored’\(^{41}\) (Slepcov 545b) ← Mongolic\(^{42}\) *eriyen* ‘motley, variegated’: cf. Literary Mongolian eriyan (Kalużyński 1962: 33; Rassadin 1980: 72);

\(^{34}\) Cf. Yakut *d’eŋgir küöx* ‘emerald-blue’ (Sidlov: online), cf. also čeŋgir ~ näŋgir (Kalużyński 1962: 46; 57).

\(^{35}\) Cf. Middle Mongol - ; Modern Mongol: Buryat senxir; Onon Khamnigan - ; Khalkha cexker; Kalmuck tsäŋkr; cf. also Literary Mongolian čangkir ‘whitish, blond; grey (of hair)’.


\(^{37}\) +ngkir ~ +nggir: non-productive Mongolic suffix, which forms adjectives, e.g. čangkir ‘whitish, blond; grey (of hair)’ < *ča: cf. čaγan ‘white’; ulanggir ‘reddish’ < *ula: cf. ulayyan ‘red’.

\(^{38}\) E.g. Yakut tunulï maŋan ‘dazzling white field’ (Pekarskij); maŋan xār ‘white snow’ (Sidlov: online). Cf. also Yakut maŋxay ‘to become white’, maŋas ‘with white head, white-beaked (about an animal)’.

\(^{39}\) Middle Mongol - ; Modern Mongol: Buryat, Onon Khamnigan - ; Khalkha manxen; Kalmuck maŋxan.

\(^{40}\) Cf. Mongolic → Siberian Turkic: Yenisei Turkic: Khakas maŋxan ‘pale yellow’; Sagai, Koibal, Kachin maŋkan ‘fallow (color of horse)’, cf. Sagai maŋan ‘the pallor on the forehead of horses, white patches around eyes of horses (color of horse)’ (R); Sayan Turkic: Tuvan maŋgan ‘very white’ (Khabtagaeva 2019: 56).

\(^{41}\) Cf. Yakut *äriän inax* ‘motley cow’, *eriien kün* ‘variable weather’.

\(^{42}\) Cf. Modern Mongol: Buryat eryēn; Onon Khamnigan eryēn; Khalkha erēn; Kalmuck erēn.
Yakut būlūr ‘light-bay’ (Slepcov 87b) ← Mongolic43 *būrul ‘grey, grey-haired, greyish’: cf. Literary Mongolian buyurul ~ buyural (Kalúżyński 1962: 34, 66; Rassadin 1980: 72);
Yakut čakır ‘white’44 (Slepcov 507a) ← Mongolic45 *čaqır > čakir ‘very white, light, snow white; white spots on finger nails or on the feathers of a bird’ < *ča46+kir {Mongolic denominal noun suffix forming adjectives, see Khabtagaeva 2001: 119}; cf. Literary Mongolian čaqor ~ čooqor (Kalúżyński 1962: 46; Rassadin 1980: 72) ← ? Turkic: cf. Old Turkic čaği르 ‘blue, blue-grey’47
Yakut čuoğur ‘variegated, multicolored’ (Slepcov 513b), cf. another form where excrescence happened: Yakut čočūgir ‘id.’ (Slepcov 511a) ← Mongolic48 *čōqur < čooqor ‘variegated, dappled, spotted, mottled; pockmarked’: cf. Literary Mongolian čooqor ~ čooqor (Kalúżyński 1962: 36; Rassadin 1980: 72);
Yakut d’ajil ‘horse with big spots on the neck and shoulders’49 (Slepcov 124b) ← Mongolic50 *jayal ‘having dark spots on the neck and shoulders (of a stallion or gelding)’: cf. Literary Mongolian jayal (Rassadin 1980: 72);

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43 Cf. Middle Mongol: Mukaddimat al-Adab būruł; Rasulid Hexaglot būrul; Yi yu bowuruł ~ būrul; Modern Mongol: Buryat būruł; Onon Khamnigan būral; Khalkha būral; Kalmuck būrl (for more Mongolic data, see Nugteren 2011: 293).
44 Yakut → Ewenki (Tokko, Tommot, Uchur) čakir ‘white-colored reindeer’ (Khabtagaeva 2011: 104).
45 Middle Mongol - ; Modern Mongol: Buryat saxir; Khalkha caxir; Kalmuck tsūkř; Onon Khamnigan -.
46 The ‘dead’ base of the Mongolic word is the form *
ča, cf. Literary Mongolian čayi- (< *ča+y-i-) ‘to be[come] white, turn pale; to turn grey (of hair); to dawn, grow light’; Literary Mongolian časun (< *ča+sUn) ‘snow’; Literary Mongolian čayan (< *ča+GAn) ‘white’; Literary Mongolian čayır (< *ča+yi-r) ‘zinc, tin’ (Khabtagaeva 2001: 130).
47 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Rässänen (VEWT 96), Doerfer (TMEN 2: 77) and Clauson (ED 409b).
48 Cf. Middle Mongol: Mukaddimat al-Adab čoqr ‘mottled’; Rasulid Hexaglot čoqur; Zhiyuan Yiyu čoqur ‘horse with white spots’; Modern Mongol: Buryat sŏxor ‘mottled; fig. semi-consciousness’; Onon Khamnigan cŏxör ‘motley’; Dagur tšōkur; Khalkha cŏxör ‘spotted, speckled; pock-marked’; Oirat dial. tsŏxār ~ tšōxor ~ tsŏxur ‘speckled, spotted (of a horse)’.
49 Cf. Yakut sur d’ağil at ‘a grey horse with black spots on the shoulders’, d’ajil toyon ‘Steller’s sea eagle (lat. Haliaeetus pelagicus)’.
50 Middle Mongol: Yi yu cayal ~ jayal; Modern Mongol: Buryat zagał; Onon Khamnigan dzagał; Dagur - ; Khalkha dzagol; Kalmuck zagal.
Yakut kärä ~ körö ‘grey, whitish grey’ (Pekarskij 1940) ← Mongolic *kēr * keger ‘bay or chestnut (color of horse)’: cf. Literary Mongolian keger; Yakut sälir ‘color of isabella; a horse with black main and tail’ (Slepcov 305a) ← Mongolic *sāral < sayaral ‘ashen, dun-colored’: Literary Mongolian sayaral ~ sāral (Kalużyński 1962: 66; Rassadin 1980: 72).

5. Semantically, the Mongolic name of a bird changed to the color of a cattle in Yakut:

Yakut sāďaģay ‘(cattle) with a white stripe on the back’ (Slepcov 304b) ← Mongolic *sāįjı̆ų < šayajı̆ųı̆ ‘magpie’ < *šayajı̆ +GAI {Mongolic denominal noun/diminutive suffix, see Poppe GWM §123; Khabtagaeva 2001: 117}: cf. Literary Mongolian siiyajı̆ųı̆ ~ šayajı̆ųı̆ (Kalużyński 1962: 32; Rassadin 1980: 72) ← Turkic *saŋızğaŋ < saŋız +GAn {Turkic denominal noun suffix, which forms nouns that designate names of plants and animals, see Erdal 1991: 85}: cf. Old Turkic saŋızğaŋ.

6. There is one case where the basic Mongolic color term is used regarding to the color of a horse in Yakut:

Yakut ulān ‘mouse dun, red dun, yellow dun (of a horse)’ (Slepcov 432b) ← Mongolic *ulān < *hulān ‘red’: cf. Literary Mongolian ulayan ‘red’ (Kalużyński 1962: 28; Rassadin 1980: 72).

51 Cf. Middle Mongol: Precl.Mo. kegēr; Secret History ke’er; Yi ye keir; Mukaddimat al-Adab kēr ~ keher; Rasulid Hexaglot kehür ~ keher; Modern Mongol: Buryat xēr; Onon Khamnigan kēre; Dagur ke’re; Khalkha xēr; Kalmuck kēr.

52 Mongolic → Siberian Turkic ‘chestnut’: Yenisey Turkic: Shor kār; ChulymT kār; Altay Turkic: Altay, Quu, Teleut kār; Kipchak: Kazak, Kırgız kār. For more details and data, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: §114), Stachowski (1993: 88).

53 Cf. Middle Mongol: Precl.Mo. saγāral; Rasulid Hexaglot saral; Modern: Buryat hāral; Onon Khamnigan sāral; Dagur sāral; Khalkha sāral; Kalmuck sārl (see also Nugteren 2011: 479).

54 Cf. Middle Mongol: Hua-yi yi-yu saŋiąiq; Modern: Buryat šązgai ~ šązgai; Onon Khamnigan šądzągai ~ sądzągai; Dagur sāfy; Khalkha šądzgai; Kalmuck šązgā ~ šązgā.

55 For more Turkic data and etymology, see Räsänen (VEWT 396b), Clauson (ED 818a) and ESTJa (2003: 166–169).

56 Cf. Middle Mongol: Precl.Mo. ulayān; Secret History, Hua-yi yi-yu hula’an; Yi yu fula’an; Zhiyuan Yiyu hulā; Muq hula’an ~ hulān ~ ulān; Leiden hulan; Rasulid Hexaglot hulān; Modern Mongol: Buryat ulān; Onon Khamnigan ulān; Dagur xulān; Khalkha ulān; Kalmuck ulan (for more Mongolic data, see Nugteren 2011: 363).
7. Next color term is of unknown origin. The authors of ESTJa (2003: 360–361) connect it with a Mongolic word. The word is also present in all Kipchak and some other Turkic languages with the same meaning ‘grey color of horse’ and with initial spirant s-,\(^{57}\) which confirms the foreign origin of the word\(^{58}\) due to the phonetic rule that the original Turkic initial consonant *s* is regularly deleted in Yakut:\(^{59}\)

Yakut sur ‘grey (color of a horse)’ (Slepcov 344b) < *sūr ← ? Mongolic\(^{60}\)
*sayural < sayaral ‘ashen, dun-colored’: cf. Literary Mongolian sayaral.

The etymological background of the basic color terms and the special color terms of animals in Yakut are summarized in the following two tables:

### Table 1: The basic color terms in Yakut

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color term</th>
<th>Yakut form</th>
<th>Origin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>xara</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>‘bright, pure’</td>
<td>ürügen</td>
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<td></td>
<td>neutral meaning</td>
<td>maŋan ~ maŋan</td>
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<td>Red</td>
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58 For Turkic data and etymological background of the word, see Laude-Cirtautas (1961: §116), Doerfer (TMEN 3: 287) and ESTJa (2003: 360–361). From Turkic, the word was borrowed in New Persian (Doerfer TMEN 3: 287).

59 E.g. Yakut ān ‘you’ ~ Old Turkic sān; Yakut ān ‘to milk’ ~ Old Turkic saŋ̃; Yakut ūt ‘milk’ ~ Old Turkic sūt, etc.

60 Cf. Middle Mongol: Rasulid Hexaglot saral; Modern Mongol: Buryat hāral; Onon Khamnigan sāral; Dagur sāral; Khalkha sāral; Kalmuck sārl (for more data, see Nugteren 2011: 479).
### 3 Derivation of Color Terms in Yakut

From the morphological perspective, there are five special Yakut suffixes added to color terms. Functionally, they have a diminutive character and form adjectives designating slight shades of colors. Etymologically, two of them are of Mongolic origin, one is of Turkic origin and two have a hybrid character, i.e. Turkic-Mongolic origin.

#### 3.1 Denominal Noun/Adjective Suffixes

1. **+lXŋX**

   The Yakut suffix +lŋl (with different variants +ðŋð, +tŋt, +nŋn) forms nouns designating slight shades of colors:

   - Yakut kihilliŋi ‘reddish’ (Slepcov 213a) < kihil ‘red’ +lŋl;
   - Yakut kitarxaydïŋi ‘reddish’ (Slepcov 214a) < kitarxay ‘red’ +dlŋl;

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**Table 2** The special color terms of animals in Yakut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color terms of animals</th>
<th>Yakut form</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>xara</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>kürüŋ</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>arağas</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kuğas</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ulăn</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palomino, light bay</td>
<td>xoŋor</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bülür</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>čakïr</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td>turağas</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>sälîr</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>boroŋ</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sur</td>
<td>? Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>köňkçïr</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kärä – körö</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variegated, multicolored</td>
<td>čuoŋur</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>äriäñ</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dappled, spotted</td>
<td>ala</td>
<td>Turkic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d’agilig</td>
<td>Mongolic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yakut küöxtüŋü ‘bluish, greenish’ (Slepcov 200b) < küöx ‘blue’ +tUŋU;
Yakut kürüŋnüŋü ‘brownish’ (Slepcov 201a) < kürüj ‘brown’ +nUŋU;
Yakut maŋannïŋï ‘whitish’ (Slepcov 235a) < maŋan ‘white’ +nIŋI;
Yakut surduŋu ‘mousy gray (color of a horse)’ (Slepcov 345a) < sur ‘grey’ +dUŋU;
Yakut xaratïŋï ‘blackish, darkish’ (Slepcov 483a) < xara ‘black’ +tIŋI;
Yakut xaraŋatïŋï ‘darkish, fuscous’ (Slepcov 483a) < xaraŋga ‘dark color’ +tIŋI.

There are two hypotheses regarding to the origin of the suffix:
– The Yakut suffix is maybe connected to the Mongolic compound suffix +lAnggi, which consists of the denominal verbal suffix +lA and deverbal noun suffix forming adjectives -nggi (Khabtagaeva 2001: 129).

The function of the Mongolic denominal verbal suffix +lA is to denote the acquirement of a quality (Poppe GWM §245), while the deverbal noun suffix -nggi is a non-productive in Mongolic languages, it appears in Buryat (Sanžeev 1962: 120) and Kalmuck (Szabó 1943: §145). The Mongolic compound suffix is related also to color terms (Khabtagaeva 2001: 129), e.g. Buryat xar- 
langgi (< *qaralanggi) ‘dark, blackened’, šarlangi (< *siralanggi) ‘yellowed, yellowing (of leaves)’.
– More likely, it is the Yakut internal development from the suffixes +lA- and -ŋI.

If the Yakut productive denominal verbal suffix +lA- is of Turkic origin, which forms intransitive verbs (for details, see Ubrjatova 1982: 217, e.g. kihil ‘to paint with red color’ < kihil ‘red’; ürüŋnâ ‘to add white color’ < ürüj ‘white’, äriäänňä ‘to make variegation’ < äriän ‘mottled’, ulaxannâ ‘to make big’ < ulaxan ‘big’, etc.), another deverbal noun suffix -ŋI is of Mongolic origin (Kałużyński 1962: 95) (for details, see Ubrjatova 1982: 167, e.g. ďadanjë ‘poor’ < ďaday ‘to become poor’, döyũŋj ‘deaf’ < döy- ‘to stun’, säräm ‘doubtful’ < sărâ- ‘to doubt’, etc.).

2. +(V)rKAy

The compound Yakut suffix consists of the denominal verbal suffix +(V)r- and the deverbal noun suffix -KAy (for details on function, see Károly 2013: 107–108). Both suffixes are productive in Yakut. If the first one is of Turkic origin and forms intransitive verbs from nouns and adjectives (for details on function, see Ubrjatova 1982: 219–220, e.g. silâhïr ‘to become warm’ < silâs ‘warm’, tïihïr ‘to become hard or tight’ < tïyis ‘hard, tight’, čümpr ‘to calm down’ < čümpu ‘quiet, calm’, tialïr ‘to blow’ < tial ‘wind’), while -KAy ~ -GAy is of Mongolic origin (Kalùżyński 1962: 76) and forms adjectives (for details,
see Ubrjatova 1982: 165, e.g. *xamparxyay ‘ramshackle’ < xamparīy- ‘to collapse’, dölörköy ‘holey’ < dölörūy- ‘to make a hole’, etc.). Important to note that the devoiced variant -KAy is peculiar for words ending in -r. The compound suffix +V)KAy forms color terms from ‘petrified’ bases, all forms are derived from color terms which are absent in Modern Yakut:

Yakut bolörxyoy ~ balärxyay ‘ash-colored, ashy-grey, dark grey’ (Slepcov 74b) < *boro ‘grey’ +rKAy;
Yakut borolxoy ‘grey’ (Pekarskij 502) < *boro +rKAy;
Yakut kitarxoy ‘red, ruddyy’ (Slepcov 214a) < *qīt ‘red’ +ArKAy;
Yakut kōgörköy ‘light blue, blue, green’ (Sidorov: online) < *kök ‘blue’ +ArKAy;
Yakut kubarxoy (> kubaxxay) ‘pale’ (Slepcov 184b) < *kuba ‘pale yellow’ +rKAy;
Yakut ölbörköy ‘dim, pale’ (Slepcov 285b) < *ölbö61 ‘pale’ +rKAy;
Yakut saharxoy ‘yellow’ (Slepcov 318b) < *sah ‘green’ +ArKAy;
Yakut tunärxoy ‘pale grey’ (Slepcov 401b) < *tunā62 ‘white’ +rKAy.

Etymologically, the suffix belongs to hybrid Turkic-Mongolic origin forms.

3. +(A)cčAr

Yakut kögöččör ‘grey, ash grey (color of horse)’ (Slepcov 175b) < *kök + (A)cčAr.

Despite the fact that the form *kökečer is absent in Mongolic, it may be the source of borrowing for Yakut. The Yakut suffix +(A)cčAr is connected to Mongolic productive suffix +čAr, which has a diminutive function (Poppe GWM: §113; Szabó 1943: §192). The suffix is also added to Mongolic color terms, e.g. alayčar ‘colorful’ < alay ‘multicolored, spotted, variegated, motley’, boročar

61 Cf. Yakut ölbödyai- (< *ölbö+Dxy- {Yakut denominal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 220}) ‘to pale, to fade’. The base is of unknown origin. Possibly, it is connected to Mongolic color term ilū ‘grey’ (Mostaert 1941: 531a).

62 Cf. Yakut tunär- (< *tunā +r- {Yakut denominal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 219}) ‘to show white unclearly’; tunārīy- (< *tunā +rly- {Yakut deverbal verbal suffix, see Ubrjatova 1982: 220}) ‘to have bluish white color’, tunāx (< *tunā +K {Yakut denominal noun suffix}) ‘toadstool’; tunali (< *tuna +ll {Yakut Yakut denominal noun suffix}) magan ‘bright white’, tunax (< *tuna +K {Yakut denominal noun suffix}) ‘milk food’, etc. The etymology of word is unknown.

4. +GAr
There is only one color term to which the Yakut productive denominal noun suffix +GAr (for details on function, see Ubrjatova 1982: 164, e.g. *balγaγar ‘swollen’ < *balγa: balγay- ‘to swell’, xilagar ‘cross-eyed’ < *xila: xilay- ‘to make cross-eyes’, etc.) of Mongolic origin was added (Kalużyński 1962: 79). The suffix is discussed as a deverbal noun in Ubrjatova’s grammar, but it is more proper to consider it as a denominal noun suffix, which forms adjectives similarly in the Mongolic languages (Khabtagaeva 2009: 281, e.g. *buǰijir ‘curly’ < *buǰaγa: cf. buǰiyi- ‘to curl’; γonǰ oγor ‘long, stretched, thin and long, oblong, oval’ < *γonǰa: cf. γonǰayi- ‘to taper, to have an oval or elongated shape’).

Yakut maŋxaγar ‘white, whitening’ (Slepcov 235b) < *maŋxa ‘white’ +GAr, see above maŋan ‘white’

5. +lĀx
A productive Yakut suffix, which forms adjectives from nouns, e.g. öydȫx ‘clever, smart’ < öy ‘mind’, kǖstēx ‘strong’ < kǖs ‘power’, dółōx ‘happy’ < dōl ‘happiness, luck’, etc. (for details on function, see Ubrjatova 1982: 163). The suffix is of Turkic origin, related to Old Turkic +lİG. I found only two Yakut color terms derived with this suffix:

Yakut dajilāx [ulān] ‘palomino (of a horse)’ (Slepcov 125a) < dajil ‘horse with big spots on the neck and shoulders’ +lĀx;
Yakut xaralāx ‘blackish’ (Slepcov 482b) < xara ‘black’ +lĀx.

3.2 Denominal Verbal Suffixes

1. +DXy-
The most verbs connected to color terms were derived with the productive denominal verbal suffix +DIy- / +DUy- with its variants +lIy- / +lUy, +nIy- / +nUy and +sIy- / +sUy (for details on function, see Ubrjatova 1982: 220). The list of variants is expanded with +rIy-:

Yakut araǰastiy- ‘to be[come] yellow’ (Slepcov 44) < araǰas ‘yellow’ +tIy-;
Yakut boloruy- ‘to become grey’ (Slepcov 74) < *boro ‘grey’ +lIy- (metathesis);
Yakut *boroŋsuy*- ‘to be[come] grey’ (Slepcov 75) < *boroŋ* ‘grey’ + */sUy*;  
Yakut *kubarîy*- ‘to become pale’ (Slepcov 184) < */kuba* + *rXy*;  
Yakut *ölbÔdûy*- ‘to pale, to fade’ (Slepcov 285) < */ölbô* + */DXY*;  
Yakut *tunârîy*- ‘to have a bluish white color’ (Slepcov 401) < */tunâ* ‘white’ + */ry*.

2. *(A)r*-  
Some verbs connected to color terms with the suffix *(A)rKAY* were derived with denominal verbal suffix *(A)r* (for details on function, see above *(A)rKAY* and Ubrjatova 1982: 219–220):  

Yakut *kitâr*- ‘to be red’ (Slepcov 213) < */kit* ‘red’;  
Yakut *kögöör*- ‘to be blue; green’ (Slepcov 175) < */kôk* ‘blue’;  
Yakut *sahar*- ‘to become yellow’ (Slepcov 318) < */sah* ‘green’;  
Yakut *xarâr*- ‘to become black’ (Slepcov 482) < *xara* ‘black’.

4 Conclusion  
In all, fifty-one color term was collected from different Yakut dictionaries and papers (Slepcov; Pekarskij; Afanas’jev & Xaritonov 1968; Gabyševa 2003; Borisova 2013), and electronic sources (Sidorov: online). The material demonstrates that the basic color terms as *white*, *black*, *red* and *blue* are of Turkic origin, the secondary basic color terms such as *yellow* and *green* are derived with a hybrid Turco-Mongolic suffix *(A)rKAY*, while the colors denoting *brown* and *grey* are Mongolic loanwords. An interesting fact is that for *white* two different terms are used in Yakut. The Turkic *ürüŋ* is used only in shamanic terminology and folklore texts (Prokopieva 2019, personal communication) with the meaning ‘bright, pure, clean’, while the Mongolic loanword *maŋan* with its phonetic variant *maġan* is used for everything, which is used originally in Mongolic languages only as a horse color. From the collected eighteen color terms of animals (mostly horses) twelve terms are of Mongolic origin, thereby proving the great Mongolic influence on the Yakut lifestyle.

The second part of the paper discusses the most productive Yakut suffixes *(X)rX* and *(X)rKAY*, used with color terms and designating slight shades of colors have a hybrid Turko-Mongolic origin. Ultimately the etymological study of Yakut color terms presents the evidence that the Yakut language is an archaic Turkic language which had a strong Mongolic influence.
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