

## **Dairying on the eastern fringes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppe**

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Recent research (Jeong et al. in review) shows that ruminant dairy pastoralism was established on the Eastern Eurasian steppe by the mid-second millennium BCE. These Late Bronze Age dairy pastoralists exhibit only minimal genetic exchange with outside groups, suggesting that dairying was adopted by local populations through cultural transmission rather than through population replacement. The Eastern steppe was subsequently home to the Xiongnu (ca. 200 BCE to 100 CE), who are commonly associated with linguistic elements of proto-Turkic and the historical Mongols (ca. 1200-1400 CE), descendants of speakers of proto-Mongolic, both originally expanding from its eastern fringes. Whereas the ultimate homeland of the proto-Mongolic language is situated in the West Liao River Basin and that of proto-Turkic in present-day eastern Inner Mongolia and Shanxi, their most recent common linguistic ancestor, Proto-Turko-Mongolic, can be traced back to the West Liao River Basin, ca. 1550 BC (Robbeets et al. in press). In our presentation we will align the linguistic and the archaeogenetic evidence for dairying on the eastern fringes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppe, as far east as the West Liao River Basin and as early as the second millennium BC. To this end, we will combine molecular evidence for milk consumption and linguistic reconstruction of dairying vocabulary such as verbs for 'to milk' in Proto-Turko-Mongolic.