

Linguacultural features of toponymic units in the example of Bukhara region

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Annotation. This study investigates the linguacultural characteristics of the toponymic system specifically in the example of Bukhara region, emphasizing their historical, semantic, and cultural significance. As a historic Silk Road center, Bukhara has absorbed influences from Persian, Arabic, Turkic, and Russian languages, all of which are reflected in its geographical names. The research categorizes Bukhara's toponyms into religious, geographical, economic, and ethnic groups, analyzing their historical context and linguistic evolution. The findings suggest that Bukhara's toponyms function as a cultural and historical archive, preserving the city's legacy and demonstrating linguistic interconnections across civilizations.

Keywords: Bukhara, toponymy, lingua-culture, historical semantics, Silk Road, place names

Лингвокультурные особенности топонимических единиц на примере Бухарского региона

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Аннотация. Это исследование изучает лингвокультурные особенности топонимической системы на примере Бухарского региона, подчеркивая их историческую, семантическую и культурную значимость. Будучи историческим центром Шелкового пути, Бухара впитала влияния персидского, арабского, тюркского и русского языков, что нашло отражение в ее географических названиях. В рамках исследования топонимы Бухары классифицируются на религиозные, географические, экономические и этнические группы, анализируются их исторический контекст и лингвистическая эволюция. Результаты показывают, что топонимы Бухары выполняют функцию культурного и исторического архива, сохраняя наследие города и демонстрируя языковые взаимосвязи между цивилизациями.

Ключевые слова: Бухара, топонимия, лингвокультура, историческая семантика, Шелковый путь, названия мест

Buxoro viloyati misolida toponimik birliklarning lingvokulturologik xususiyatlari

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot Buxoro viloyati toponimik tizimining lingvomadaniy xususiyatlarini o'rganib, ularning tarixiy, semantik va madaniy ahamiyatini ta'kidlaydi. Ipak yo'lining muhim markazi bo'lgan Buxoro joy nomlarida fors, arab, turkiy va rus tillarining ta'siri aks etgan. Tadqiqotda Buxoro toponimlari diniy, geografik, iqtisodiy va etnik guruhlariga ajratilib, ularning tarixiy rivojlanishi va lingvistik evolyutsiyasi tahlil qilinadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, Buxoro toponimik tizimi shahar merosini saqlab qoluvchi madaniy va tarixiy arxiv bo'lib, tillar va sivilizatsiyalar o'rtasidagi o'zaro bog'liqlikni aks ettiradi.

Kalit so'zlar: Buxoro, toponimiya, lingvomadaniyat, tarixiy semantika, Ipak yo'li, joy nomlari

Introduction. Toponyms (place names) play a crucial role in understanding the linguistic and cultural history of a region. They serve as historical markers that encode information about ancient settlements, economic activities, and socio-political transformations. Bukhara, one of the oldest cities in Central Asia, has been a major cultural, religious, and economic hub for over two millennia. Its toponyms reflect influences from different civilizations, including Persian, Arabic, Turkic, and Russian. The region's place names provide insights into historical migrations, trade routes, and linguistic interactions.

Main part. The influence of Persian and Arabic languages in Bukhara's toponymy is significant due to the historical dominance of these languages in administrative, religious, and cultural contexts. Many place names in Bukhara reflect Persian origins, as the region was part of the Persianate world for centuries before the Turkic and Mongol incursions. The suffix -abad, which denotes a settlement or city (e.g., Fayzabad), is commonly found in Persian-influenced regions, indicating the establishment of a prosperous or religiously significant place. Similarly, Arabic toponyms often incorporate religious elements, such as Dar al- ("house of," e.g., Dar al-Kuttab, "house of books" or schools).

One prominent example is Poyi Kalon, a name derived from Persian, meaning "Great Foundation" or "Foot of the Great." The architectural complex includes Kalon Mosque, Kalon Minaret, and Mir-Arab Madrasah, symbolizing Bukhara's role as a major Islamic educational and spiritual center.

While Persian and Arabic exerted significant influence, Turkic elements also shape Bukhara's toponymy. The Turkic influence became more dominant after the 10th century with the rise of Turkic dynasties, including the Karakhanids and later the Shaybanids. Many Turkic-derived names reference geographical features or natural resources, as Turkic-speaking nomads relied on these markers for navigation. For example, Karakul (literally "Black Lake") is a compound of the Turkic words kara (black) and kul (lake). This naming pattern is widespread in Turkic regions, reflecting the importance of water bodies in semi-arid landscapes. Similarly, The town of Vobkent, located near Bukhara, is a strong example of how language and culture are intertwined in place names. The name Vobkent reflects both Persian and Turkic influences, demonstrating the region's multicultural history. The name consists of two parts: "Vob" – A Persian word meaning "stream" or "water source," indicating the presence of water, which was essential for agriculture and settlement. "Kent" – A Turkic suffix meaning "city" or "settlement." This suffix is commonly found in Central Asian place names such as

Tashkent and Samarkand, showing Turkic linguistic influence. This combination of Persian and Turkic elements in one name reflects how Bukhara's history was shaped by different linguistic and cultural traditions. While Persian was the dominant language of administration, religion, and scholarship, Turkic languages influenced everyday communication and governance. Vobkent was an important Silk Road Town, serving as a center for trade, agriculture, and Islamic scholarship. The town is home to the Vobkent Minaret, built in the 12th century during the Karakhanid dynasty. This minaret is one of the oldest in Central Asia and is similar in design to Bukhara's Kalon Minaret. It features Kufic Arabic inscriptions with Quranic verses, reflecting the deep Islamic cultural and religious traditions of the region. In addition to its religious significance, Vobkent was a trading hub, where merchants from different regions exchanged silk, ceramics, and spices. The reference to water ("Vob") in the town's name suggests that it was also an important agricultural center, benefiting from irrigation canals that supported local farming. The toponym Vobkent is more than just a geographical name—it represents centuries of cultural exchange, migration, and trade. The blend of Persian, Turkic, and Arabic linguistic influences in this name reflects Bukhara's historical role as a multicultural and multilingual center along the Silk Road. Understanding such place names helps preserve the historical and cultural identity of the region.

In terms of Morphological and Semantic Analysis, Bukhara's toponymy exhibits rich morphological patterns that blend different linguistic traditions. Several recurring morphological structures include:

1. Suffixation: -kent (Persian): Denotes a city or town (Tashkent, Samarkand), -obod (Persian): Signifies prosperity or habitation (Dahobod, Fayzobod), -li (Turkic): Indicates possession or association (Gulbaxli – "place with roses").
2. Religious and Honorific Titles: Chor-Bakr ("Four Pure Ones") – Named after four respected Islamic scholars, Pir-i Khard ("Wise Elder") – Indicates a place associated with a revered Sufi saint.
3. Economic and Trade-related Names: Toqi Zargaron ("Dome of Jewelers") – A historic market center specializing in jewelry, Tim Abdullakhan – A covered bazaar built under Abdullakhan II's rule.

These naming conventions highlight how Bukhara's toponyms reflect its social hierarchy, religious devotion, and economic activities throughout history.

According to Historical Context and Changes in Bukhara's Toponymy, we can divide these changes into some periods. The first is Pre-Islamic and Sogdian Influence. Before the Islamic era, Bukhara was part of Sogdiana, a region known for its trade and urban culture. Many ancient Sogdian toponyms were later replaced with Persian and Arabic names due to Islamization. However, some pre-Islamic elements persist in modern place names. For instance, the term Vakhsh (from the Sogdian deity of water, Vakhsh) still appears in names related to river systems in Central Asia.

The next is Soviet-era Renaming and Post-Independence Restoration. During the Soviet period (1924–1991), many traditional Uzbek and Persian toponyms were replaced with Russian or socialist-inspired names. For example:

New Names: "Lenin Street," "Soviet Square", Restored Names Post-1991: Historical names like Chor-Bakr and Toqi Zargaron were reinstated after Uzbekistan's independence in 1991.

This renaming and restoration process reflects the political and cultural shifts in Bukhara's identity across different historical periods.

Primarily, Historical layers of Bukhara's toponyms are taken into consideration. According to this, linguacultural categories of Bukhara's toponyms can be embodied. Religious and spiritual impacts on toponyms of Bukhara are paramount as it has been a major Islamic center. For example: "Poyi Kalon" – it means "Great Foundation and foot of the great" in the heart of Bukhara (derived from "Persian"), consists of Kalon Mosque, Minaret and Mir-Arab Madrasah, considered as one of the most iconic Islamic structures in Central Asia. Mir-Arab Madrasah, itself still one of the most prestigious Islamic school. The Minaret nicknamed "Tower of death" as it was historically used for public executions (criminals were thrown from the top). Generally, this complex symbolizes the power of Islam in Central Asia and reflects Bukhara's role as a major hub on the Silk Road. Let us

pay attention to modern place names in Bukhara like the city called “Galaosiyo” which can reveal its cultural, social significance up to now even with its just the history of naming. In the past, the lower branches of the Zarafshan River—the Kangav, Jo‘yzar, and Varvadun canals—were always full of flowing water. Using their strength, intelligence, and ingenuity, our ancestors built numerous mills along these canals. The name "Galaosiyo" originates from this fact. The word "Gala" means "a group", while "osiyo" means "mill". According to elders who have passed this story down for many years, the place was named Galaosiyo because of the large number of mills in the area which were actually important for daily life of local people. In 1927, when the number of mills in the district was recorded, it was noted that only four mills remained in Galaosiyo village. Over the next century, the appearance of Galaosiyo changed significantly, expanding as the district center, with construction and improvement projects increasing. Each year, the city expanded with new buildings, and dozens of organizations, enterprises, and institutions were established and bank, agricultural department, and medical facilities were built. Another examples is “Chor-Bakr” which is derived from persian, meaning "Four Pure Ones," referring to four Islamic scholars buried there. The Chor-Bakr architectural complex is also located in this district. Situated in the west of Bukhara, in Sumitan village, the complex includes a khanqah (Sufi lodge), mosque, madrasa, and mausoleums (dakhmas). Construction of the complex began in 1559 under Shaybanid ruler Abdullakhan II and was completed over nearly ten years. In the following centuries, additional structures were built, especially mausoleums for the Juybor sheikhs’ descendants, gradually shaping the site into a necropolis. The name "Chor-Bakr" comes from the Tadjik word "Chahor," meaning "four," and refers to "Four Bakrs". During the Soviet period, the complex’s buildings were converted into storage facilities. After Uzbekistan gained independence, the complex was renovated and transformed into a pilgrimage site and tourist destination. The buried water reservoir and half-ruined mausoleums of the Juybor sheikhs’ family were restored, and a garden was established in the area. During the independence years, a collaboration between Uzbek and French scholars resulted in the publication of an album documenting tombstone inscriptions, which was later published in Paris. -talli as suffix can be seen a lot in the source of Bukhara toponyms. For example, the toponyms Talaliyon and Talligandum are associated with specific locations in Bukhara. Talaliyon refers to a hill where descendants of Caliph Ali are believed to have resided while Talligandum can translated to "Wheat Hill" or "Grain Hill," this term describes a hill or elevated area where wheat grows. Specifically, Kichik Talligandum is a street located in the Vobkent district of Bukhara region, Uzbekistan. These names reflect the geographical and cultural characteristics of their respective areas. Talaliyon is a shortened form of "Talli Aliyon." The name refers to a hill where the descendants of Caliph Ali once lived. Another interpretation suggests that it means "those living on the hill" or "inhabitants of the hill." In both cases, the name originates from the Arabic word "tall," which means hill, elevation, or mound of earth, reflecting the natural geographical features of the area. If the name is derived from the word "talal," it would take on the meaning of "ruins" or "remains of a settlement." Additionally, there is a connection to the word "tala," which refers to a circular trap used for hunting birds. However, the relevance of this hunting device to the place name remains an open question. Talligandum means "Bug‘doytepa" (Wheat Hill) or "Dontepa" (Grain Hill). It refers to a hill or elevated land where wheat grows or possibly a hill that resembles a grain shape. The variations of the name Talalion such as tal, tall, tali, and tala—all indicate elevations, mounds of earth or sand. In ancient times, fortresses, palaces, mansions, and temples that had fallen into ruin were also called "tal".

The dominant languages in religious toponyms are Persian and Arabic, as these were the primary languages to introduce Islamic notions. The presence of honorifics such as Miri (Prince) and Pir (Saint) reflects the influence of Sufism. Most names describe the region’s natural features. For example, Karakul – A Turkic name means "Black Lake," word for word, referring to a dark-colored water body, Vobkent – A Persian name which is combination of Vob (stream) and Kent (settlement). it is undeniable fact that most turkic names dominate geographical toponyms, as nomadic Turkic peoples relied on natural landmarks. Persian elements are commonly seen in the end of place names

like -kent which tends to indicate urbanization. It refers that toponyms in Bukhara can highlight Bukhara's role as a Silk Road trading hub. For example, Toqi Zargaron – Persian for “Dome of the Jewelers,” referring to the historical gold market, Tim Abdullakhan – A covered bazaar built under Abdullakhan II's rule. Furthermore, the dominant language again in Persian for trade as Persian-speaking merchants played a key role in trade. As we can witness some names reflect historical migrations and the presence of diverse ethnic groups. For example, Hazara – which is linked directly to Hazara people, who historically settled in parts of Bukhara. As these names demonstrate us, the historical intermingling of Persian, Turkic, and Mongolic influences are a lot.

This study employs a qualitative research approach, combining historical, linguistic, and cultural analysis. Moreover, it is also followed to comparative analysis that Bukhara's toponyms were compared with those in other historic Silk Road cities. Toponyms act as a linguistic time capsule, preserving historical events, religious influences, and trade connections. The fusion of Persian, Arabic, and Turkic elements reflects Bukhara's multicultural identity. Political Influence on Toponymy Soviet-era renaming erased many traditional names. Post-independence efforts have restored historical names, reinforcing national identity. Preservation of Toponyms to modern urbanization somehow threatens the loss of historical place names. Bukhara's toponyms serve as a reflection of its diverse historical and cultural influences. Persian, Arabic, Turkic, and Uzbek elements are interwoven in these names, preserving centuries of migration, trade, and religious development. Understanding these toponyms enhances our appreciation of Bukhara's identity and the role of lingua-culture in shaping regional history.

Conclusion. The toponymic landscape of Bukhara serves as a linguistic and cultural archive, preserving the city's history of Persian, Arabic, and Turkic interactions. The names of places not only encode past migrations, religious traditions, and economic activities but also demonstrate linguistic convergence over centuries. Understanding Bukhara's toponymy allows us to appreciate how language and history intertwine in shaping a region's identity.

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