Toponyms as units of cultural and linguistic transfer: A linguistic and cultural aspect

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Abstract

The study covers etymological, linguistic and cultural analysis of the toponymic vocabulary in one of the regions of the Republic of Bashkortostan. The study briefly examines the historiography of the fixation of the Bashkir oiconymic vocabulary and its scientific description in the Arab and Russian sources, and analyses the ethnolinguistic situation on the territory of the Republic of Bashkortostan, in particular, the existence of three groups of Turkic-speaking population (Bashkirs, Mishars, Teptyars), having different origins and bearing three accents of two related languages – Bashkir and Tatar. The authors classify oikonyms (placenames) into appellative and motivated by other onyms, reveal the etymology of appellative onyms, and demonstrate their secondary nature in relation to hydronyms and oronyms. An analysis of placenames motivated by other onyms reveals an inseparable link between placenames and anthroponyms. The latter are analysed in terms of origin (original, Arabic, Persian, Kalmyk, mixed), thematic groups ("beautiful names of Allah", names of Muslim prophets, names of the Prophet Muhammad's associates, etc.), and functions (well wishes, amulets). When analysing original anthropo-oikonyms special attention is given to the functioning of anthropo-formants, as well as to clarifying their connection with mythological and religious beliefs of the Turkic peoples of Bashkortostan.

Keywords: Bashkortostan; intercultural exchange; oikonymy; anthroponymy; etymology

1. Introduction

A special class of proper names – toponyms – encodes special linguistic and extralinguistic information, which is revealed through linguistic and cultural analysis of this lexical group. Toponyms form an integral part of the general linguistic system, their emergence and development is not only due to linguistic regularities: they contain within their foundations significant and meaningful information from a variety of information areas: historical, social, cultural, psychological, ethnographic, etc. Toponymic vocabulary is one of the most informative layers of onomastics of any language in linguistic and cultural terms: it fixes linguistic phenomena of remote eras, traditional ways of

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understanding space, historical, ethnographic, sociological realities, facts of interethnic and interlingual interaction (Abisheva, Denich & Drygin, 2014). The oikonyms forming a special category of toponymic vocabulary – the names of settlements – are also an important linguistic source, clearly demonstrating not only the ways of nominating inhabited objects accepted within a particular linguistic community, but also the evolution of these ways under the influence of various factors.

Studies of toponymy and, in particular, oikonymy in Bashkortostan have a rich history and an extensive bibliography. The first empirical data on the subject can be found in the reports of Arab travellers of the 9th-12th centuries and in the works of Arab geographers of that time. The first attempts at scientific analysis or explanation of the toponyms of Bashkortostan were made in the second half of the 18th century by Russian researchers P.I. Rychkov (1887) and P.S. Pallas (1786); the attempts at scientific analysis of individual toponyms, involving folklore and historical data, were made in the 19th century by V.I. Dal (Bredis & Lomakina, 2020), M.V. Lossievsky (1878) and other researchers. Separate toponymic studies have been preserved in the works of G. Vildanov, Dzh.G. Kiyekbayev, T.G. Baishev (1962). The formation of toponymy as an integral field of Bashkir linguistics took place in the second half of the 20th century, when studies by A.A. Kamalov (1994) and R.Z. Shakurov (2012) were published; the development of its individual fields, particularly oikonymy, is connected with the studies of F.G. Khisamitdinova (1991), G.Kh. Bukharova (1998), A.Z. Asfandiyarov (2009) and other authors. Currently, monographic studies on the toponymy and oikonymy of Bashkortostan have been published, as well as fundamental reference books: Dictionary of toponyms of the Bashkir Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (1980), "Ataysal" (a directory of Bashkir villages on the territory of the republic and neighbouring regions) (Kamalow & Kamalova, 2001), "History of villages of Bashkortostan and adjacent territories" by A.Z. Asfandiyarov. Toponymic studies within separate administrative-territorial units have by now a local history and journalistic nature, therefore a scientific description of the oikonymy of the Uchalinsky district has a certain scientific relevance and potential.

The toponymic space of one of Russia's important regions, Bashkortostan, is studied in linguistic, cultural and comparative aspects in order to identify both linguistic and extra-linguistic information encoded in the names of settlements (Kamalow & Kamalova, 2001). It is the linguistic and extra-linguistic information that enables the units under study to represent the relationship to the cultural-historical and national-specific features of a particular ethnic group in the context of a particular time.

2. Materials and Methods

The Uchalinsky district of the Republic of Bashkortostan is located in the far east of this constituent entity of the federation, in the northern part of the Bashkir Trans-Urals. The names and coordinates of specific rural settlements in Bashkortostan only date back to the 16th-18th centuries and can be found in archive documents (guardianship certificates, petitions, court cases, affairs of general surveying, reports of participants of Bashkir uprisings suppression etc.) and diaries of academic expeditions of the second half of the 18th century. The oldest cartographic source, containing the names of Bashkir villages, is the "Atlas of the Orenburg province" of Warrant Officer Ivan Krasilnikov, compiled in 1755 (Ryvjkov, 1887). The continuity between the settlements mentioned in the early sources and modern villages and hamlets is difficult to establish: this is due to the destruction of many settlements during the uprisings, resettlements resulting from the sale of land to settlers, and measures taken by the Tsarist and Soviet authorities to enlarge the Bashkir auls. Currently, there are 88 settlements in the study area, including 1 city. According to the 2004 census, the national composition is dominated by Bashkirs (83.7%), Russians (7.9%), and Tatars (7.7%) (Fatkullina, 2011). The Russian population is compactly settled in the villages of Kiryabinka, Poliakovka, Voznesenka,

Ilyinka and Pervy May. They were all founded after 1767 and emerged in relation to the development of the region's mining wealth (Asfandiyarov, 2009).

The Turkic-speaking population is represented by three groups – the Bashkirs (the indigenous population), the Teptyars and the Mishars. The Teptyars represent an ethnos-class group, which emerged during the development of Bashkir society from the patrimonial landowners, who lost the right to own land and lost contact with their community because of economic insolvency (the impossibility to pay Bashkir tribute and to perform military service "at their own expense") (Khamidullin et al., 2014). The Mishars reside in 4 settlements of the Uchalinsky district: Akhunovo, Kidysh, Tanychau and Tashmuryn, and speak the Uchalinsky accent of a Middle dialect of the Tatar language. Their emergence in the area under study dates back to 1780, when natives of the Chelyabinsk uyezd founded the village of Akhunovo (Asfandiyarov, 2009). It should be noted that the Mishars in the area did not retain their original Western dialect of the Tatar language, and both of the two named groups were considered separate ethnic groups until 1926. Bashkir population of the area belongs to clan groups Baryn-Tabyn, Kara-Tabyn, Kubalyak, Kuvakan, Kudey, Tilyau (Asfandiyarov, 2009) and they speak Miass accent of eastern dialect of Bashkir language. An important characteristic of Bashkir oikonymy is its widespread use, along with the official ones, folk names of settlements, which are often numerous (Table 1) (Fatkullina et al., 2016). The function of folk placenames is to specify the official name, especially when there are several settlements with the same name, by emphasising the location, the names of known inhabitants, and the clan membership of the population.

Table 1. Official and folk placenames of the Uchalinsky district (fragment)

No.	Official name in Russian	Official name in Bashkir	Folk names
1.	Abzakovo	Абҙаҡ	Кинйәкәй
2.	Absalyamovo	Әпсәләм	Этимгэн, Бәләкәй ауыл
3.	Aznashevo	Аҙнаш	Әүәз
4.	Amangildino	Амангилде	Сәнсәр, Соҡот
5.	Karaguzhino	Ҡарағужа	Ҡәһәрмән, Күбәләк Ҡарағужаһы
6.	Kudashevo	Ҡоҙаш	Бурансы, Һайыҫҡан
7.	Mindyak	Миндәк	Килмәк, Алтаяҡ
8.	Uchaly	Учалы	Митрәй, Микусәй, Асыуҙы

29 "folk" placenames were derived from anthroponyms, 9 – from hydronyms and oronyms, 3 – from the names of clan associations (Көҙәй, Ҡыуаҡан, Һарт), 2 – from the status of the settlement relative to the parent village (Бәләкәй ауыл 'Small village', Яңауыл 'New village'), 2 – presumably from the names of aimaks 'groups of related families' (Кәкүк 'cuckoo', Һайыҫҡан 'magpie'), 2 – cannot be etymologised without special field research (Тисләм, Соҡот).

3. Results and Discussion

All of the district's placenames can be divided into appellatives based on nominative names and oikonyms based on proper names. There are 22 oikonym-appellative names in the district, 19 of them have a more or less reliably established original (Turkic) origin, 1 is Russian, 1 is Mongolian, and 2 of them have no reliable etymology (Garipov, 2007). It should be noted that in all but one case the appellatives are of a secondary nature: oikonyms are not derived directly from nominative names, but from the names of the natural objects they denote. Among the primary toponyms, hydronyms prevail (10 names), while there are oronyms (3 names) as well as 1 oronym and hydronym at once (Kamalov et al., 1980; Ufa Scientific Center of the Russian…, 2002). It is worth noting that the modern astionym Uchaly is a phonetic variant of the hydronym Асыуҙы 'angry', which fixed a conformity of the Bashkir consonant [c] with the common Turkic [ch] – Achuly and then underwent metathesis 9 (Table 2).

Table 2. Oikonym-appellative names of the Uchalinsky district (fragment)

No.	Oikonym	Toponym	Etymology
1.	Altyn-Tash	Altyntash / oronym	Bashk. алтын таш 'golden stone'
2.	Aushkul	Aushkul / hydronym	Bashk. әүеш күл 'sloping lake'
3.	Irendyk	Irendyk / oronym	Bashk. dial. ирән 'strong, brave man', топоформант дек 'mountain' (Kamalov et al., 1980)
4.	Kandybulak	Kandybulak / hydronym	Bashk. dial.ҡанды болаҡ 'bloody river'
5.	Tashmuryn	Tashmuryn / oronym	Bashk. таш морон 'stone cape'
6.	Ural	Ural / hydronym	Probably from Bashk. уралыу 'to entwine, encircle'; Evenk. урэл 'mountains' (Kamalov et al., 1980).
7.	Uralsk	Ural / hydronym	Probably from Bashk. уралыу 'to entwine, encircle'; Evenk. урэл 'mountains'
8.	Uchaly	Uchaly / hydronym	Bashk. асыуҙы 'angry, furious'

Among the placenames of the Uchalinsky district there are three that are derived from the names of holidays – Voznesenka (from the Orthodox feast in honour of which the altar of the village church is consecrated), Pervyi May (from the day of solidarity of workers; the toponym preserves a feature of Russian-Bashkir language interference – the incorrect concord of numeral and month in the date), Oktyabrsk (from the anniversary of the Great October holiday). There is one settlement named after the organisation – Komsomolsk. One of the villages is named after the post of a Muslim clergyman – Akhun 'the leader of the Muslim clergy in a particular administrative unit (road, district, town)', as it was founded by Akhun Abdulla Daushev (Asfandiyarov, 2009).

The oikonyms, derived from ethnonyms, are considered the most ancient in Bashkir linguistics, as they either record the fact of foundation of the "mother" settlement, from which other villages, which were part of the clan volost, were evicted, or note the fact of penetration of a foreign element into the volost. Moreover, the clan subdivision Sart is known among the Bashkir clans Aile, Burzyan, Tabyn and Tamyan. The vast majority of placenames on the territory of the district originate from anthroponyms – surnames (Poliakov, Orlov, Ilyin) and names of first settlers or famous inhabitants of settlements. As generally among Bashkir anthroponyms, there are names of indigenous (common Turkic and Bashkir proper), Mongolian, Arabic, Persian and mixed (Arab-Persian, Turkic-Arabic, Turkic-Persian) origin (Suleymanova et al., 2018).

Toponyms of Arabic origin include the official names: Абдулкасим (Ar. абд ал-касим 'slave of the Distributor'), Аһылай (Ar. асл 'genuine, original'), Әпсәләм (Ar. абд ас-Салам 'slave of the Peacemaker'), Баттал (Ar. Баттал 'strong, brave, quick'), Йәһүдә (Ar. from Hebrew 'praise, glorious'), Ғәлиәхмәр (Ar. али 'The highest', ахмар 'beautiful'), Кәрим (Ar. 'Generous'), Мансур (Ar. 'winner') and others. There are two Persian origin anthropo-oikonyms in the district - Ҡәһәрмән (Persian кахраман 'hero, bogatyr') and Наурыҙ (Persian ноу руз 'new day', a holiday of the new year according to the solar calendar).

There is one Kalmyk name in the toponymy of the area – Тайсын (Kalm. дайчин 'warrior'). The origin of the second oikonym is connected with the adoption of the first settler of the village Rasulevo by Tarkhan Rasul Itzhimyasov, a Kalmyk called Taisyn. The anthroponym itself refers to the figure of Shukur-Daichin, the second chief taishi of the Kalmyks, who attempted to conclude a military-political alliance with the Bashkirs (Asfandiyarov, 2009). Mixed Bashkir-Persian and Bashkir-Arabic anthroponyms are formed by combining two bases – a foreign and a native one, represented, as a rule, by an anthropo-formant. The Arabic-Bashkir anthropo-oikonyms in the area include: Абҙак (абыҙ 'mentor', from Arabic хафиз 'who knows the Koran by heart', Bashk. аҡ 'white'), Амангилде (Arabic 'successfully, safely'), Bashk. килде 'came'), Иманғол (ar. 'faith', Bashk. ҡол 'slave'), Истамғол (Ar. ислам 'submission', Bashk. ҡол 'slave') and others (Rubinchik, 1985). The Bashkir

anthropo-oikonyms themselves in the area can be divided into single- and double-base ones. The first ones consist of a root morpheme with or without a derivational or inflectional affix: Аҙнаш (аҙна 'week, Friday', dial. diminutive), Бурансы (буран 'blizzard', сы 'affix of a figure'), Илсе (ил 'country, clan', се 'affix of a figure'), Килмәк ('stranger from outside'), Ишкенә (иш 'couple, comrade', diminutive), etc. The latter ones include two roots, one of which is usually a formant. Байрамғол (байрам 'holiday', ҡол 'slave'), Балбыҡ (бал 'honey', ?), Байнаҡал (бай 'rich man', һаҡал 'beard'), Биксура (бик (particle) 'very, strong', сура 'bogatyr') and others. (Rubinchik, 1985).

Among the oikonyms of anthroponymic origin there are two compound words – Көсөк-Маяҡ 'Kuchukovo-Mayak' and Малай-Муйнаҡ 'Boy-Muinak', as well as five word combinations: Бәләкәй Ҡазаҡҡол 'Small Kazakkul', Иҫке Байрамғол 'Old Bayramgul', Ҡарт Муйнаҡ 'Old Muinak', Яңы Байрамғол 'New Bayramgul', Яңы Хөсәйен 'New Husain'.

Among the personal names recorded in the oikonymy of the Uchalinsky district there are anthroponyms reflecting the order of children birth: names with the formant иш having an additional meaning 'the first in a pair' were usually given to first-born, with the formant кинйә 'youngest child' – to post-borns, and the same goes for the name Ҡалуй. A lot of names are connected with calendar concepts of Bashkirs and dates of their bearers' birth: these are anthroponyms Аҙнаш (the bearer was born on Friday), Айыт (on the Muslim holidays), Наурыҙ (Nowruz), Сәфәр (in the month Safar), probably Баҙарғол (on market day) and Байрамғол (on holidays). The majority of the names are goodwill names designed to make the bearer's life happy and prosperous; among them there are both indigenous ones: Рысай, Ураҙ, Һөйөндөк, Биксура, Сураман and Юлдаш, and also borrowed and mixed names: Баттал, Ғәзелша, Ғәлиәхмәр, Мансур, Мортаҙа, Татлембәт etc.

They are joined by names named after well-known characters in Islamic history: Муса (after the Prophet Moses), Хөсәйен (after the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, the martyr Husayn), Хәлит (after the companion of the Prophet Muhammad, the warrior al-Khalid ibn Abd al-Walid) and others. A number of names of Arab, mixed origin actualise the notions characteristic of the Muslim picture of the world of the human being as the executor of God's will. This includes all names formed from "the beautiful names of God" and with the formant ҡол.

Finally, a number of names have the nature of amulets, designed to divert or scare away evil forces from the bearer. These include names that contain a colour characteristic: Абҙаҡ, Аҡкужа, Ҡарағужа, a negative characteristic: Илтабан, Мәҫкәү, Туңғатар, Шәмәр, Ялсығол, animal names and nicknames: Көсөк, Ҡобағош, Муйнаҡ (a dog name), Этимгән. Among the latter ones stand out anthroponyms connected with the dog cult, common to the Bashkirs and possibly serving as an echo of connections of the Bashkirs' ancestors with the Iranian world (Fedorov, 2016; Burganova, & Makhmutova, 1989).

4. Conclusions

Thus, the oikonymy of the Uchalinsky district of Bashkortostan represents a multicomponent and multilayered complex, which reflects archaic concepts of the Bashkir people concerning space and humans, the standards accepted by the people's consciousness, values and personalities of the Islamic religion, traces of foreign ethnic additions to the Bashkir ethnos and Bashkir population, elements of the Russian anthroponymics and orthodox confessional lexicon, as well as the "new language" of the early Soviet period. All this demonstrates the historical mobility of the oikonymic system of the Bashkir language and its inextricable connection with ethnogenetic, cultural and social processes taking place in society.

Acknowledgements

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