

## ETHNOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF HISTORICAL TOPONYMY OF SOUTHERN KAZAKHSTAN

Tleuberdiev B., Shvaikovskiy A., Ibragimova U.

*South Kazakhstan State University im. M. Auezova, e-mail: koncel@ukgu.kz, srd-sksu@yandex.kz*

---

The ethnographic aspects of regional toponymy considered in this article prove that application of the toponymic data can present a number of valuable data on the history of material and spiritual culture of the region.

---

**Keywords:** ethnographic aspects, toponymy, culture

It is known that the geographical factor refers to one of the major system qualities of an ethnic community. It includes the generality of territory, natural resources, economic and geographical position of an ethnos, productive territorial complexes and their components. The influence of the geographical factor is evident at different levels: as determining beginning of the genesis, formation and functioning of certain economic and cultural type of the Kazakh ethnos; as basic reason of the extreme readiness of the Kazakh national geographical terminology, quantitative and qualitative structure of the Kazakh toponyms. The regional ethnocultural (ethnographic) toponymic lexicon comprises a set of the data revealing cultural, historical and other features of a certain region. The new direction of toponymic researches which can be called ethnographic toponymics, has things in common with ethnography, history, geography, country-studying and other disciplines, and, applying the data, the ethnographic toponymics promotes the solution of some problematic questions of the mentioned above sciences.

It is possible to state that the most striking impression on onymic lexicon of the Kazakh language had the ancient historically set traditional national type of Kazakh management – the nomadic cattle-breeding. The detailed differentiation of kinds of pastures and relief elements in the geographical lexicon is interpreted by mediated influence of nomadic cattle-breeding: presence in toponymy of considerable percent of names of various kinds of vegetation used for cattle forage; presence in toponymy of a considerable number of colour, size, form designations that characterizes the heightened role of visual perception of the world around by the nomads, etc.

The leading form of economic activities in concrete geographical conditions substantially determined the major ethnographic parameters of a life mode. In turn the various aspects of material and spiritual culture of the ethnos became the reason for occurrence and functioning of the ethnodetermined and ethnomarked nominal and onomastic lexicon.

The names of hibernation («kystau»), pastures («zhaiylym», «zhailau», «kuzeu», «kokteu»), nomadic roads («kosh zholy»), places

of ore and mountain workings («ken», «ken orny»), artificial water sources («aryk», «kudyk»), many settlements, mountains and natural landmarks with sacral semiotics, etc. can be referred to the ethnodetermined part of historical toponymy of Southern Kazakhstan.

Such forms of management and phenomena of spiritual culture as nomadic, seminomadic and settled cattle-breeding, agriculture, irrigation, mining and metallurgy, town-planning, various beliefs and cults, religions; different spheres of national life: hunting, festivals, games, customs, etc. played the role of a distinctive determinant in occurrence and functioning of this part of ethnographic toponymy of Southern Kazakhstan.

### Tasks setting

Such lexical elements (ethnolexemes, etnografizms, ethnomarkers, professionalisms) as «kystau» («kystak»), «kuzeu», «kokteu», «oris», «kozykesh», «tebin» («aktebin», «alatebin»), «zhailau» («kan zhailau», «sary zhailau», «oi zhailau», «etek zhailau», «bokter zhailau», «tor zhailau», «ker zhailau»), «bedelik», «otar», «shabyn» («shabyndy», «shabyndyk»), «ashy», «orten», «orda», «arba», «balyk», «korgan», «asar», «tam», «kamal», «oba», «mazar» («mazarat»), «mola», «zirat», «beyit», «tortkul», «kora», «aran», «kon», «kotan», «koryk», «kent», «auyl», «abat», «rabat», «kepe», «sumbe», «kesene», «tura», «baba» («bab»), «aulie», «bayge», «toy», «as», «topalan», «may», «sas», «aydar», «zhylan», «burkit», «kerege», «kebezhe», «sandyk», «dorba», «kalta», «korzhyn», «ketpen», «pispek», «kudyk», «aryk», «togan», «keriz», «nayza», «kylsh», etc. form the ethnomarked toponyms of Southern Kazakhstan.

Toponyms containing ethnims and genonyms can also be referred to the same group of toponyms. Division of ethnographic toponyms on ethnodetermined and ethnomarked is conditional in certain degree, as all the ethnomarked toponyms are inherently ethnodetermined.

In the article the ethnomarked toponyms of Southern Kazakhstan are generally considered and analyzed as numerically infinite. That is why the ethnodetermined toponymic material of the region demands special research.

It is well known that the efficiency of pastures and their use during warm time (in summer, partly in spring and autumn) were defined not only by their fodder resources, but also by providing with natural water sources which level quite often was very limited. That is why the nomads constructed artificial reservoirs – wells, diggings, dams, etc. In Southern Kazakhstan along with the areas rich with natural water sources representing ancient agricultural oases, the big area is occupied by deserted and semidesertic zones where the necessity for wells is quite obvious. Thus in historical toponymy of Otrar, Algabas, Suzak, Shardara areas a considerable role play the names of wells: «Babakudyk», «Ashirkudyk», «Bai-bishe kudyk», «Baimen kudyk», «Beskepe kudyk», «Beskudyk», «Bestamdy kudyk», «Buzhyrkudyk», «Birshakty kudyk», «Aiten kudyk», «Auganbai kudyk», «Akbiy kudyk», «Akkudyk», «Akmalai kudyk», «Akmamet kudyk», «Dala kudyk», «Zheti kudyk», «Egizbai kudyk», «Eltai kudyk», «Kairak kudyk», «Karakudyk», «Karauly tobe kudyk», «Katty kudyk», «Kalta kudyk», «Kakkudyk», «Karauly kudyk», «Kuspek kudyk», «Kopen kudyk», «Koskudyk», «Kasymbek kudyk», «Kysh kudyk», «Kosaryk kudyk», «Shatyrykudyk», «Sorkudyk», «Syrkudyk», «Kersen kudyk», «Ketpenkaldy kudyk», «Korzhyndy kudyk», «Kakpakty kudyk», etc.

Rather productive in carrying out an analysis of semantic content of a «wells» toponymy can be a semantic model: «Anthroponym + term («kudyk»». In the pre-revolutionary nomadic cattle-breeding economy the communal property was applied to all artificial water sources. Though the process of digging of wells was carried out by one master or 2–3 masters for digging a deep well («shanyrau»), fundraising for payment of diggers' labour, annual and seasonal restoration of wells, and, of course, their use were carried out by a community (auyl). Creation of wells was financed not only by community, but also sometimes by one person («bai»), and then such wells were named in honour of the owner (bai).

Some wells got the names of their makers, i.e. famous masters – well-diggers.

Other models of names of wells can indicate their various kinds and distinctive features. Thus the name «Kos kudyk» (a twofold well) means that the wells were situated side by side, and containers for water, operating by a horse (a camel, an ox), were alternately lowered into the wells that provided a rational watering place for a significant amount of cattle.

To ethnomarked part of ethnographic toponymy of Southern Kazakhstan can be referred toponyms with such ethnomarkers as «kora», «kotan», «aran», «kepe», «kon» that designate

premises for cattle: «Polatkora», «Taskora», «Arandy», «Kotandy», «Beskespe», «Kepe-saray», etc. Nearby the «kystau» the nomads organized specially fenced off and protected shelters «kora» made of stone, tree, cane, turf, brushwood, old condensed manure. If for severe winter conditions of Northern Kazakhstan were made special covered housings almost for all four kinds of livestock (sheep, cows, camels, emaciated and weaken horses), whereas in steppe and deserted areas of Southern Kazakhstan housings only for a horned cattle and sheep were constructed. And, for cows, which winter pastures were usually riverside zones of rivers and lakes, were made covered housings, for sheep, which spent winter in the areas of deserts and semi-deserts open housings were constructed.

In mountain and foothill areas of Southern Kazakhstan were constructed artificial or used natural stone shelters for keeping the cattle. Thus nearby the Beszhal mountain (Tulkibas area of Southern Kazakhstan) there was a stone housing («taskora», «polatkora») for construction of which the natural shelter was used (informant Kerimbay-uly Auyelbek, 1973). In sands of Moinkum and Kyzylkum open «kora» made of saxaul, cane mat («shiya»), snow were constructed; near the rivers and lakes in cane tangles the housings made of cane were constructed or a round shelter for cattle known as «kotan» was sloped. In Southern Kazakhstan for keeping young cattle dug-outs or primitive hovels («zherkepe», «zher yishik») were used.

The ethnomarked toponymic material combined in one lexical set with general meaning «housing for keeping the cattle», indicates various features of winter cattle keeping (winter pasturing), caused by regional natural and environmental conditions.

It is possible to conclude that the ethnomarked toponyms which are territorially bound (local), can convey important information concerning the forms and features of economic management in a certain region or concrete territory. These data can be relevant for determining one of the set of gradation of nomadic and settled types of economy and life mode of the nation, its local ethnographic groups.

On existence of irrigation agriculture on the territory of Southern Kazakhstan since ancient times indicate numerous ethnomarked toponyms with such ethnomarkers as «aryk», «togan», «toma», «boget», «keriz», «egin», «egindi», «bidai», «tary», «arpa», «konak», «kauyn», «shui», «aty», «shyrym», etc. Medieval written sources have many examples of names of irrigation ditches (aryks). So, in Sygnak, as Ruzbikhan informed, the fields were irrigated by Seykhun aryks listed in Sygnak charters: «Kyzyltal», «Chikhil» – «Tugay»,

«Ordakent», «Kalta» – «Dzhalgiya», «Dzhulak», «Ming-Bulak», «Arslandy», and also water sources of «Toktamys», «Harash», «Hisarchuk».

For determination and localization of regional zones of irrigated agriculture mapping of «aryk» toponyms would be rather effective. A continuous frontal investigation and recording of all without exception toponyms (micro-toponyms) of the region, and also identification and localization of historical «aryk» toponyms, mentioned in ancient, medieval and later written sources are necessary for this purpose.

### Results

A considerable historical, ethnographic and also toponymic material concerning agriculture and agroirrigation in Southern Kazakhstan is contained in a well-known book by N. Dingelshtedt «Experience of studying irrigation of Turkestan territory: Syr-Dariya area» (Vol. I–II, SPb., 1893–1895), in editions of Migratory department in 1906–1908 (the Materials on the Kirghiz land tenure of Syr-Dariya area. Chimkent district, Vol. I, Tashkent, 1908; Vol. II, issue 1–2, Tashkent, 1910; the Materials on the Kirghiz land tenure of the area of the river Chu and lower reach of the river Talas of Chernyaev and Auliye-ata districts of Syr-Dariya area. Tashkent, 1915; Economic life of the Kirghiz, Sarty and Russian population of the southeastern part of Chimkent district of Syr-Dariya area, Vol. I, Tashkent, 1910).

These works are of a great value for studying the ethnographic toponymics of Southern Kazakhstan.

The indications on some features of irrigating (irrigational) systems and forms of their usage can be contained in names of irrigation ditches (aryks), canals, natural boundaries, arable lands, settlements: Bozaryk, Belaryk, Akaryk, Terekti toghan, Zhiynbay aryk, Zhunigun aryk, Birlik, Rabat, Kumkol, Ogiz zhylgha, Balyk, Salaryk, Koghamaryk, etc.

Thus, for example, toponyms with the notion «toma» contain indications concerning the fact that in this district for the use of deep springs special artificial pools were constructed. For this reason a ravine where a spring flowed into was dammed. During the night it was filled with water, and in the afternoon the dam was broken through in that place, from which there was an irrigation ditch (aryk) to the fields. Such «toma» were used in the system of irrigation agriculture in former Kazghurt and Maylikent volosts, and in the latter (currently Tyulkubas area) sometimes through a dam there were put special clay pipes that were inserted at a level of the bottom of a spillway and supplied water to irrigation ditches (aryks).

A careful linguistic (etymological) analysis of names of irrigation ditches (aryks) on the ba-

sis of historical and ethnographic data will help to investigate some features of a traditional system of irrigation of arable lands of the region as, despite an apparent abundance of the researches, many questions were clarified not enough.

Thus in the former Semirechensk area «... except head barrows) and minor there are third-rate irrigation ditches (aryks)». In our materials the names «Basaryk», «Belaryk» indicate that in this area the main (head) irrigation ditches (aryks) were used.

The toponyms with an ethnomarker «kyariz» are isolated and generally they can be found in the territory of Turkestan area. Existence of kyariz system of irrigation in this region in the past is proved to be true by archaeological researches. Thus in the suburbs of Sauran in the XVI century there were kyarizs the remainders of which were found by famous Kazakh archeologist K.M. Baypakov. N. Dingelshtadt wrote that in the northwestern part of Turkestan area there were large enough constructions total to 250 wells and united by adits.

The ethnomarked toponyms of Southern Kazakhstan with terms «baba» (bab) undoubtedly have sacral semiotics: the hillock Artykata, the ridge Surekata (on the border with Tashkent area), the tomb Seksenata-aulie, the lake Koylanata, Kozdyata, the river Koshkarata, the stream Zhunisata, the cemetery Arystanbab, etc. More concrete and detailed their consideration with application of etymological, ethnographic data can give a number of valuable scientific data concerning cults, beliefs, ceremonies and customs of the Kazakh ethnoses.

A considerable historical and ethnographic interest is represented by numerous enough historical names of ancient, medieval and some modern cities and settlements of Southern Kazakhstan which contain such ethnomarked lexical elements as: «tura», «balyk», «orda», «arba», «kent», «shakhar», «kala», «kat», «ket», «korghar», «khisar», «sumbe», «saray», «tortkul», «tam», «abad», «rabat», «yasay», «band», «bend», etc.

Some of these terms entered the nominal and onomastic lexicon of many world languages and have the most surprising transcontinental areas.

### Conclusion

The historical and linguistic analysis of place-naming in Southern Kazakhstan demonstrates an interesting picture of interaction and interference of nomadic and settled ethnoses within one region. According to B.V. Andrianov and T.L. Zhdanko on vast spaces of Central Asia and Kazakhstan the nature itself was favourable to historical interaction between settled farmers and nomads-cattlemen: fertile foothills and wide valleys of the rivers were the base of ancient agricultural culture;

deserts and steppes served pasturable cattle breeding; massive mountain ranges with vertical change of landscapes were used by both cattlemen and farmers. The academician A.Kh. Margulan who investigated the history of cities and building art of ancient Kazakhstan, wrote that the basins of the modern rivers Chu, Talas and Syr-Darya were the centers of vigorous city culture. Vivid examples of the linguistic (toponymic) data application for disclosing and analysis of the history of cities of ancient and medieval Kazakhstan are presented by A.Kh. Margulan. Thus, for example, he wrote: «The cases of organizing sites and settlements according to vehicles formation can be met quite often in the history of Kazakhstan, and especially it is characteristic for the Middle Ages. The settlements which got their names according to vehicles formation, existed in the ancient times on Syr-Darya river (Kangka), in the Middle Ages on the river Ural (Kyryk arba), in the lower reaches of the river Nura («Toghanastyn toksan eki kuymesı»), near Ulutau («Orda-Khonghan») and in Ubagan. The Kazakh place names connected with the word «orda» («horde») are more typical for such sites and settlements».

Even preliminary consideration of the ethnomarked «city toponymy» – historical place-naming of Southern Kazakhstan indicates difficult historical and ethnographic, ethnogenetic, ethnocultural contacts of various ethnoses within vast historical and ethnographic

area that the Central Asia and Kazakhstan are for the adjacent regions: Asian Near East, Transcaucasia and Northern Caucasus, Transurals, Southern Siberia, Central Asia.

The ethnographic aspects of regional toponymy considered in this article prove that application of the toponymic data can present a number of valuable data on the history of material and spiritual culture of the region.

### References

1. Dushkov B.A. Geography and psychology: the approach to problems. – M., 1987. – 190 p.
2. Kaydarov A.T., Kerimbayev E.A. Ethnolinguistic aspects of the Kazakh onomastics // Academy of Sciences of KazSSR: Philological series. – 1990. – № 3. – P. 5.
3. Andrianov B.V., Cheboksarov N.N. Economic and cultural types and the problem of their mapping // Soviet encyclopaedia. – 1972. – № 2. – P. 8.
4. Spasskiy G. Kirgiz-kaysaks of the Big, Middle and Small Hordes. – Siberian bulletin, 1820. – Part 9, Vol. 2. – P. 85.
5. Plotnikov L. About the necessity and means of prevention of further extension of loose sands in steppes of the Internal Kirghiz Horde // Notes of Orenburg department of RGO. – 1871. – Issue 2. – P. 246–247.
6. Materials on the Kirghiz land tenure: Turgay area, Kustanay district. – Vol. 5. – Voronezh, 1903. – P. 42.
7. Argynbayev H. The Kazakh animal husbandry. Ethnographic outline. – Almaty, 1969. – P. 46–50.
8. Masanov N.E. The problems of social and economic history of Kazakhstan at the turn of XVIII–XIX centuries. – Almaty, 1984. – P. 105.
9. Mukanov S. Folk heritage. – Almaty, 1974. – P. 84.
10. Materials on the Kirghiz land tenure of Syr-Dariya area. – Chimkent district, Vol. I. – Tashkent, 1980. – P. 177.