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GENERAL OVERVIEW OF TOPONYMY IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: *This thesis offers an in-depth analysis of toponymy in Uzbekistan, presenting a detailed examination of the country's place names that encapsulate its historical, cultural, and geographical essence. The study delves into the origins and meanings of place names across Uzbekistan, investigating their linguistic components, historical roots, and cultural implications. It highlights how significant historical events, like the Silk Road, Mongol invasions, and the Soviet influence, have shaped the development of toponymy in the region. Moreover, the paper categorizes the various types of place names found in Uzbekistan, which are influenced by natural landmarks, historical figures, and religious traditions. Through this analysis, the thesis aims to shed light on the intricate and intriguing historical, cultural, and national identity of Uzbekistan.*

Key words: *toponymy, historical roots, parametric features*

In linguistics, toponyms are considered proper nouns that identify a specific, singular object. A toponym is a type of proper noun designated for a particular place. The study of place names is known as toponymy, which falls under the broader field of onomastics. Toponyms can be categorized based on various principles, which include:⁷⁴

- 1) parametric features of the object
- 2) ontological properties of the object
- 3) the source of the toponym
- 4) etymological aspects of the place names
- 5) the reasons behind the naming
- 6) the time period of the name's origin

It's clear that developing a single classification system for place names that captures their complex and varied nature is challenging. When classifying toponyms, it's crucial to consider both the linguistic and non-linguistic factors that influence the segmentation of toponymic entities.

Toponymy is an integral part of onomastics that studies geographic names (place names), their meaning, structure, origin and distribution. A set of toponyms in any territory constitutes its toponymy (Nikonov, 2011). Traditionally, the toponym is understood as the proper name of any geographical object, any object on the surface of the earth or in its deep interior, distinguished by man as an independent unit (Superanskaya, 1984), Davletkulova (2014) defines toponyms as "historically, socially and culturally determined geographical names of any natural or artificial objects created by man on the land or water territory of the earth. Geographical names are very stable, persist for a long

⁷⁴ S.Qorayev "Toponimika" T. 2006.



time, becoming a kind of historical monuments, therefore toponymy, according to the opinion of many researchers, also belongs to a certain extent to history and source studies

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Toponymy is a valuable tool for understanding the unique histories and identities of different regions, as the names of places often reflect the languages, beliefs, and experiences of the people who have inhabited them. In Uzbekistan, the study of toponymy has revealed a rich tapestry of cultural influences, from the ancient Turkic and Iranian civilizations to the more recent legacies of Persian, Arabic, and Russian rule. By exploring the origins and evolution of Uzbekistan's place names, we can gain valuable insights into the country's complex and vibrant history. The historical roots of toponymy in Uzbekistan can be traced to the ancient civilizations that once thrived in the area now identified as Central Asia. Notable cultures such as the Sogdian, Bactrian, and Khwarazmian have all contributed to the region's geographical nomenclature by naming cities, rivers, and other significant landmarks. These initial place names typically reflected the prevailing local languages, religious beliefs, and political frameworks of their respective eras. Over time, as the region experienced various waves of conquests and cultural exchanges, the toponymic landscape of Central Asia began to evolve, with Persian and Arabic elements becoming more pronounced. For instance, the advent of Islam in the 8th century introduced numerous place names with religious or Islamic connotations, marking a significant phase in the region's toponymic history.⁷⁶

The earliest known toponymic practices in the region that is now Uzbekistan can be traced back to the ancient Turkic and Iranian civilizations that flourished in the area. These early place names often reflected the local languages, as well as the religious and cultural beliefs of the time. For example, many ancient cities in Uzbekistan, such as Samarkand and Bukhara, derive their names from the Sogdian language, which was widely spoken in the region. The name "Samarkand" is believed to come from the Sogdian "Samarqand," meaning "the land of the stones." Similarly, "Bukhara" is thought to have originated from the Sogdian "VehArdashir," which referred to a local ruler or deity. As Islam spread across Central Asia in the 8th century, the toponymic landscape of Uzbekistan began to reflect the growing influence of Persian and Arabic languages. Many cities and geographic features were given new names with Islamic or Persian roots, often signifying the religious or political significance of the location. For instance, the city of Khiva was originally known as Xorazm, but later took on the name "Khiva" - derived from the Persian word "xiyaban," meaning "avenue" or "boulevard." Similarly, the name "Shahrisabz" (meaning "green city" in Persian) replaced the earlier Sogdian name for the city.

Conclusion. As Uzbekistan looks towards its future while honoring its past, the preservation and exploration of its toponyms are essential. Delving into the origins and meanings of place names enhances the understanding of Uzbek history and culture, promoting national pride and cultural insight. Continued research into the toponymy of

⁷⁵ Введение в топонимику V.A.Nikonov Moskva 2010

⁷⁶ Qirg'izboyev A.K., Mahmudov N., Abdullayev T.M., Maxmudov U.A., (2022). O'ZBEKISTON JOY NOMLARINING IZOHLI LUG'ATI Birinchi nashr. Tashkent



Uzbekistan can further enrich discussions surrounding national identity, cultural heritage, and the country's dynamic landscape.

This thesis has demonstrated that the study of toponymy provides a valuable lens through which to understand the interconnectedness of language, history, and identity.

Uzbek place names offer insights into the country's interactions with neighboring civilizations, the influence of various empires, and the resilience of local traditions. Moreover, the analysis highlights the power of language to preserve cultural memory and shape collective identity.

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