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THE DATE OF RENAMING SOME SETTLEMENT NAMES LOCATED IN BABAK DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

In the pre-independence years, certain changes occurred in the onomastic system of the Azerbaijani language as a result of various extralinguistic influences, and during the years of independence, the restoration of proper names subjected to these political influences was carried out. The article discusses certain place names included in the administrative territory of Babak district, located in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, as well as acts of vandalism against the toponymic system of our language, instances of renaming and falsification of names, and the successful policy carried out during the period of the Independent Republic of Azerbaijan, along with the restoration of changed names. Based on historical sources, the initial version, the altered version, and the restored current version of the oikonyms under discussion are comparatively analyzed.

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Introduction

As we know, one of the main functions of language is the nominative (naming) function. Ancient man's experience of naming coincides with the period when he began to perceive the surrounding world. Man's naming of the objects he observed around him is considered the primary manifestation of onomastic units. This is precisely why onomastic units, including the toponymic system of a language, are regarded as a national attribute and ethnogenesis of a nation. Such units carry great scientific and political significance due to the exceptional role they play in studying the history, ethnogenesis, and developmental path of each language and the people who are the speakers of that language. Therefore, it is incorrect to view the settlement names located in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan merely as proper names. They also reflect extensive information about our history, national identity, and ethnic origin. The falsification faced by our onomastic units, as well as our toponymic system over time, and the policy of genocide carried out by our malicious neighbors are likewise linked to the aforementioned factors. In sociolinguistics, the concept of language policy is considered from two aspects: language as an instrument, "weapon," or tool of policy, or language as the object of policy influence. Throughout various pages of history, it is possible to see the traces of occupational policy in the language of another nation; however, the genocide committed by Armenians against Azerbaijani topynyms of national origin is one of the rare cases in world history.

Undoubtedly, the atrocities committed against our unarmed people without distinguishing between the elderly, children, and women, as well as against our historical monuments, our forests lacking a national identity, and other geographical objects, did not bypass our language. Prior to the Soviet occupation, the vast majority of toponyms in the Nakhchivan region of the Republic of Azerbaijan were of Turkic origin.

As one direction of the Armenization policy carried out with the support of Russia, the changing of Turkic-origin toponyms was implemented. Changing the toponyms located in that geographical area as the first step taken within the framework of an occupational policy is an expected method. Through this method, it is possible to falsify the history of the occupied territories. The cases of alteration that occurred against our national-origin onomastic units by Russia are the most striking example of the policy mentioned above. At the same time, the changes made to the names of ancient residential settlements located in the territory of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic are the result of the occupational policy we are discussing. Collecting the primary-national forms of the names of residential settlements based on historical sources, comparing the alterations made to national-origin settlement names during the years of long-term Russian subjection, and contrasting them with the outcomes of the policy of re-nationalizing geographical names after the restoration of our state independence are among the fundamental duties of modern onomastic science.

The significance of studying the dynamics of onomastic units included in the administrative territory of Babak district.

After the establishment of Soviet power in Nakhchivan on July 29, 1920, changes began to be made to the administrative-territorial structure of the region. In the book "Vandalism: Genocide Against Historical Names" by the well-known research scholar Nazim Mustafa, a broad explanation of how Armenians falsified the historical names of the South Caucasus in the international arena was provided. Following the gradual consolidation of Soviet power locally, the names of some residential settlements were groundlessly changed, or in other words, Sovietized. Until October 23, 1978, the residential settlements included in the territory of Babak district were once concentrated under the name of Nakhchivan district, whose center was the city of Nakhchivan. The territory named after Babak, the prominent commander who led the liberation war of the Azerbaijani people, was established. Taking into account that Nakhchivan is one of the oldest residential settlements not only in Azerbaijan but in the world, as well as Armenian territorial claims against Nakhchivan, we see how significant the oikonyms of this region are as an object of research based on sources. Mentioning the importance of studying the ethnic history of Nakhchivan, I. Hacıyev notes that

> the ethnic history and national composition of the population of the Nakhchivan region... there is a great need for study. Because our insidious enemies express false and fabricated ideas regarding this issue, thereby attempting to justify that the region is part of "Greater Armenia" and to prove that Azerbaijani Turks are newcomers to these lands. In fact, this idea is completely wrong and is not based on any scientific foundation. (Hacıyev, 2009)

In our view, the scientific foundation mentioned above is precisely the study of the onomastic system of Nakhchivan based on ancient sources, and proving once again that the indigenous inhabitants of these territories are Azerbaijani Turks, whose traces are reflected in the origin of their names. The toponymic system of that area plays an important role in resolving conflicts regarding the national belonging of a geographical area. Thus, in many cases, the origin of a toponym is the best indicator of which nation the territory belongs to. Y. Cəfərli, who calls toponyms the citizenship passport of any geographical object, notes as a logical continuation of this thought that "Just as the nationality of a newborn baby is determined by the ethnic origin of its parents, the ownership of the land is determined by the people or ethnos who first gave a name to the territory" (Cəfərli, 2014). Therefore, while the dynamics of toponyms are an indicator of the paths of development and history that a nation has passed on the one hand, the primary version of toponyms, on the other hand, is an important tool that preserves the national identity of a geographical area and transmits it to future generations.

In recent years, solid answers based on archive documents have been given by our researchers to Armenian historians who falsify our history and try to erase the traces of Azerbaijanis from the territory of present-day Armenia, which are their historical and ethnic lands. The above-mentioned points once again

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emphasize the scientific and political importance of the comparative study of the primary version, the version changed during the Russian occupation, and the restored form during the independence years of the names of ancient residential settlements included in the administrative territory of Babak district of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. At the same time, along with the responsibility of conducting scientific research, it once again demonstrates that studies in the field of researching onomastic units carry additional responsibility. Because a slight mistake or a indifferent approach made in this field can produce major consequences. Mentioning that the field of researching the oikonymic system—which is considered an invaluable source in studying the ethnogenesis of our people and maintains its relevance while carrying important scientific significance—requires great responsibility and attention, F. Rzayev notes that

> We must not forget that every ancient Turkic word containing 'vang', 'zeyva', 'berd', 'diza' and Turkic tribal names such as Sak, Kas, Mang, Shir-shirak that we renounce 'age' their history and turn us into newcomers by becoming place names like Vang, Aznaberd, Der, and surnames from tribal names like Sahakyan-sak, Kasparyan-kas, Mangachuryan-mang, Gilayan-gil for the Armenians, who construct a fabricated history for themselves out of our history presenting us to the world community as a newly formed nation. (Rzayev, 2009)

As is clear from what has been said, just as important as the study of onomastic units is conducting this study from the correct perspective. Because oikonyms are the traces of history engraved in the memory of the land, and since their history is directly related to the history of the people, any incorrect approach is unacceptable. Our country has attracted the attention of invaders from time to time due to both its geographical region and its underground and surface resources; however, the territorial claims of Armenians against Nakhchivan, especially the Sharur region, and the occupational policies carried out through Russia are clearly evident in the dynamics of oikonyms belonging to Babak district.

Several of the residential settlements located in Babak district whose names were changed in 1936

Jahri – Baghirabad

The Jahri settlement is located in the territory of Babak district. As one of the ancient residential settlements and native lands of our homeland, based on Chopin's notes, we can say that Jahri has been known since the 13th century (Bağırov, 2008). The oikonym Jahri is encountered in the "Summary Register of the Erivan Province" (İrəvan əyalətinin icmal dəftəri, 1996) and in the "Detailed Register of the Nakhchivan Sanjak," which contains material from the years 1703–1730 (Naxçıvan sancağının müfəssəl dəftəri, 1997). According to archive materials and the division carried out in 1925, we can state that Jahri was the administrative center of a district consisting of fourteen villages. The area, which was subjected to Armenian raids in 1904–1905, was one of the main strongholds and strategic centers in the creation of the Aras Turkic Republic. According to the administrative-territorial division of 1921, Jahri was one of the districts of the Nakhchivan uezd. The villages given to the Armenian SSR in 1929 (Sultanbay, Itqiran, Jigin-Almali, Aghkhach) were part of the Jahri district in 1921 (Kəlbizadə, 2016). In 1936, as a result of the policy of falsification carried out against the onomastic system of Azerbaijan, the oikonym Jahri was changed to Baghirabad (Rzayev, 2019). As for the etymology of the name, F. Rzayev, who connects the name with the Sak Turks, notes that "It is explained in the form Sak+uri, where Sak is the tribal name, and in ancient Turkic languages written as uri, it means son, heir" (Rzayev, 2019). Therefore, this ethno-oikonym took the form Jahri as a result of the c~s, a~ə, and h~k sound substitution phenomenon.

Karimbeyli – Leninabad

One of the residential settlements of Babak district whose name was changed is Karimbeyli village. A. Bağırov notes that "The initial name of this village was Diza, and because the road to neighboring villages passed through this village, it was colloquially called Yol kechan Diza (Diza with a passing road)" (Bağırov, 2008). Citing Grigoriev's view, the scholar notes that after the village of Diza, which belonged to two brothers named Karim and Qulu, was divided between the brothers themselves, it began to be named Karim bey diza and Qulu bey Diza (Bağırov, 2008). Archive materials dating back to 1925 prove that the

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names of Qulubey Diza and Karimbey Diza villages were changed to Ashaghi (Lower) Leninabad and Yukhari (Upper) Leninabad, respectively. Subsequent archival documents show that in 1936, at the 9th session of the 1st convocation of the Central Executive Committee of Nakhchivan, the oikonyms Ashaghi Leninabad and Yukhari Leninabad were once again confirmed. By Decision No. 708-IQ of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated October 5, 1999, Leninabad village within the Leninabad village administrative-territorial unit of Babak district of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic was renamed Karimbeyli village, and the Leninabad village administrative-territorial unit was renamed the Karimbeyli village administrative-territorial unit.

Kultepe - Gultasha

One of the ancient residential settlements located in the territory of Babak district whose name was subjected to repression is Kultepe village. Archaeological excavations carried out here prove the antiquity of the village once again. Located on the left bank of the Nakhchivanchay, in Kultepe village, the monument stands out for its importance in the South Caucasus, as well as in the Near East. The Kultepe I monument is of special significance in studying the chronological sequence of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in the South Caucasus (Bağırov, 2008, p. 15). The name of the village was changed to Gultasha in 1936, but shortly thereafter its former name was restored. Regarding the etymology of the oikonym Kultepe, F. Rzayev writes that

> The word 'tepe' joined to the Kol tribal name is a word that reflects the subsequent distortion of the original word 'tap' used in ancient Turkic languages. Based on the o~ü and a~ü sound substitutions in the word, we consider that its component was 'tap' in its primary form. We see that this word was used in ancient Turkic languages with the meanings of 'free', 'respected', and at the same time 'uncessantly fighting', 'serving'. Taking all this as a basis, we are confident that the name was formed from the Kol tribal name and the word 'tap', meaning 'Warring Kols'. (Rzayev, 2019)

Nehram – Stalinabad

Nehram village, shown as part of the Nakhchivan nahiya in historical sources dating to the 1590s (Bağırov, 2008), was indicated within the Nakhchivan mahal in a book prepared by V. Grigoriev, which is a source dating to 1833 (Bağırov, 2008). In 1936, the oikonym Nehram, which is the historical name of the village, was replaced with the name Stalinabad. Shortly thereafter, Nehram was restored again ethno-oikonym is associated with the name of the Nakhar Turks. F. Rzayev explained the meaning of the name as "The Nakh people" or "I am Nakh" (Rzayev, 2019).

Shikhmahmud – Voroshilovabad

Shikhmahmud village, included in the territory of Babak district, is one of those residential settlements whose name was changed to Voroshilovabad during the Soviet regime as a striking example of the policy of renaming and distorting place names implemented to deny territorial belonging. In both the "Summary Register of the Erivan Province" (İrəvan əyalətinin icmal dəftəri, 1996) and the "Detailed Register of the Nakhchivan Sanjak" from 1703–1730, the name of the village is encountered as Sheikh Mahmud (Naxçıvan sancağının müfəssəl dəftəri, 1997). The name of the village, located on the bank of the Nakhchivanchay, was taken from the name of the Shikhmahmud sanctuary located there (Azərbaycan toponimlərinin ensiklopedik lüğəti, 2007). The etymology of this anthroponymic oikonym is undoubtedly related to this.

Conclusion

The administrative territory of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, as well as Babak district, has been the habitat of Turkic-origin tribes since the most ancient times. Finding that the residential settlements within these territories were named with national-origin oikonyms in important historical sources such as the "Summary Register of the Erivan Province" dating to the 1590s and the "Detailed Register of the Nakhchivan Sanjak" containing materials from 1703-1730 once again proves that these territories have belonged to our people since ancient times. Although historical processes exerted certain

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influences on settlement names, as we can see, names are not erased from history permanently. As the final conclusion of the work, we can state that although residential settlements located in the administrative territory of Babak district-such as Karimbeyli, Kultepe, Jahri, Shikhmahmud, Nehram, and others-were subjected to name changes during certain periods as a result of various extralinguistic influences, they are the motherlands of the Azerbaijani people, as shown in their initial-historical versions recorded in the "Summary Register of the Erivan Province" and the "Detailed Register of the Nakhchivan Sanjak." Historically, these settlements-oikonyms-have been an integral part of the territory of Nakhchivan and the homelands where our ancestors lived.

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