



THE ISSUES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE QOVUNCHI CULTURE

Inomov Odiljon Ulug'khoja ugli

Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizomi, Independent Researcher

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra15137>

DOI No: 10.36713/epra15137

ABSTRACT

This article highlights entering the different ethnic components into the regions of the Central Asian and the influence of these ethnic groups on the formation of the language of the population of the Qovunchi culture.

KEY WORDS: *Choch dialect, Sugdian language, Turkic toponyms, bilingualism, migration processes, ethnoses, anthropology, Turkic-speaking ethnic groups, Eurasian steppes.*

INTRODUCTION

Central Asia, including the middle and lower basins of the Syr Darya, has a special place as a region where the cultures of Turkic and Iranian-speaking tribes and peoples have been actively intermingled since ancient times. This region is considered to be a region that has attracted diverse ethnic groups in terms of its geographical location. This is confirmed by ancient written sources and archaeological finds. Avesta narratives, folk memoirs presented in Beruni's works, and their comparative analysis with archaeological monuments testify to the active participation of Turkic and Iranian-speaking ethnic groups in the ethno-cultural and ethno-political processes that took place in the region since the Bronze Age[1:382].

It is known from history that in some regions of Central Asia, one of these ethnic groups was widespread and participated relatively more actively in ethno-cultural and ethno-political processes, while the other played the same role in the rest of the region[2:72]. For example, in the past, in the northeastern parts of the Central Asian region, Turkic-speaking ethnic groups made up a very large part of the total population, while in the southwestern regions of the region, Iranian-speaking ethnic groups made up the majority of the population. Both parts of Central Asia are meeting zones where these ethnic groups are mixed. Such conflict zones are the regions of Northeast Khorasan, between Amudarya and Syrdarya, Yettisuv and oases in Eastern Turkestan, which have long been the areas of regular ethnocultural contact and intermingling of Iranian and Turkic peoples[2:72].

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was carried out using objectivity, analysis, synthesis, comparative analysis, generalization and historical chronological methods.

MAIN PART

As we know, in historical linguistic studies, there is an idea that the native inhabitants of the middle basin of the Syrdarya were clans and communities speaking Iranian languages. However, according to the archaeological research carried out in the regions of Central Asia and the analysis of ancient Chinese written sources, a Turkic ethnic group appeared in the oasis as a result of the arrival of many Turkic ethnic groups from its northeastern regions in the late Bronze Age. Especially during the Early Iron Age and Antiquity, their regular penetration into Central Asia led to an increase in the weight of the existing Turkic layer there. The increase of Turkish influence in the middle basin of Syr Darya and the influx of Turkic people into the region in groups caused the Turkic ethnoses to become more and more dense in the oasis.

During the ancient and early Middle Ages, the weight of the Turkic ethnic group was so high in the middle basins of the Syrdarya that a Turkic-Sugdian ethnocultural political field was formed on this land, and the Kangar people were formed on the basis of the Turkic ethnicity. Its appearance in the form of archaeological monuments led to the formation of the Qovunchi culture and the establishment of the Kang State in the historical-political front [20:3-158]. The entry of ancient Turkic tribes into the Choch oasis, that is, from the northeastern regions of Central Asia, took on a permanent character during the Kang state (III BC-III centuries AD), and this process reached its highest peak especially during the Turkic Khanate.



One of the factors that show the growth of Turkish influence in the oasis during the Khaganate period is the emergence of dozens of places, cities and villages with Turkish names, and their obvious appearance in the pictures of the local rulers, which are reflected in the objects, works of art, and coins of the late antiquity and early middle ages. For example, in the coins minted in Choch in the VI-VIII centuries, the appearance typical of Eastern Turks begins to appear: a man with narrow eyes, a wide round face, beardless, and long hair. There are signs specific to Turks in the works of art, figurines, and images on seals. An example of this can be seen in the belt buckles with equestrian images found in the ruins of Qanga and Sigirtepa. Another factor that ensures the existence of the ancient Turkic language in the oasis is the Turkic origin of the word "Choch", the main name of the oasis [8:8-9, 13:2003-2005]. The name of the Ohangaron river, which is an integral part of the Tashkent oasis, and Tunkat, the capital of Ilaq, can also be interpreted as a Turkish name.

In the early Middle Ages, Abridg, Arpalig, Soyliq, Itliq, Khotunkat, Barskat, Jabgukat, Arslonkat, Namudlig, Yaguzlig, Yaqaliq, Achig, Jadg'al (Chatqol) and dozens of other towns and villages with Turkic-Sugdian origins stood in the Choch oasis, and the names of these places were Choch. It testifies that a large part of its population is made up of Turks. However, the toponym Choch has been known in the oasis since ancient times. Perhaps this name is related to the arrival of a large group of Turkic-speaking Andronovo culture owners from the Enisei steppes to this land in the Late Bronze Age. Because in the economic life of cattle-breeding tribes of Andronovo, not only animal husbandry, but also mining, metallurgy, and the artistic art of making various jewelry from precious stones are important. If we take into account that the mountains surrounding the oasis are rich in valuable turquoise stone deposits, then the Tashkent oasis, which is famous throughout the East for its turquoise stones, and the term Choch (stone) attributed to it, according to its historical roots, go back to the Late Bronze Age.

According to linguistic analysis, one of the ancient names of Syrdarya, which flows through a large part of the oasis, is mentioned as Sil (is) in the work of the Roman historian Pliny (1st century AD)[9:85]. Perhaps "Silis" is the old proto-Turkic name of Sirdarya. Its other name is Yaksard, which means "true pearl, pearl" in Iranian. Taking into account the presence of Turkic and Sugdian-speaking communities in the middle basins of the Syrdarya in ancient times, its Turkic-speaking inhabitants may have called the Syrdarya Silis, and the Sugdian inhabitants called it Yaksard.

Muslim written sources also confirm that a large part of the population of the Tashkent oasis is Turkic-speaking. Tabari, in his work "Tarikh ar-rusul wa-l muluk" (9th century), speaking about the Choch people who came to the aid of the uprising of Rafe ibn Lays in Samarkand in 806, uses the phrase "Shosh ruler and his Turks" among them [11: 143 (1253), 217 (1525)]. Xuan Qian, a Chinese monk who passed through the Zhe-shi (Choch) region in 630 AD, writing about the inhabitants of the village settlements where the Chinese had merchant caravan palaces in the northern regions of Choch, notes that although they retained their language, their dress and other customs resembled those of the Turks. [25:117]. This shows that in the early Middle Ages, the political and ethnocultural dominance of Choch was on the side of the Turkic-speaking tribes.

Mahmud Kashgari also states that among the Turkic population of the regions from Isfijab (Sayram) to Taroz and Balosogun in the north of Choch, there are also Sugdians who migrated from Samarkand and Bukhara[14:30,66]. The Turkification process of the Sogdians accelerated in the early Middle Ages, especially during the Khionids, Kidaris, Ephtalians, and the Turkish Khaganate. The process of Turkification of the Sugdians was so accelerated that in the chronicles of the early Middle Ages, the Sugdians were sometimes mentioned as a tribe of the Turks[18:40-43, 19:52-61].

The Chinese traveler Hoi Chao, who traveled to the western lands in 723-726, notes that nomadic Turks lived in the areas from the "Hu" people to the "North Sea" (Aral Sea) in the north, to the "Western Sea" (Caspian Sea) in the west, and to China in the east [6:194]. According to Tabari, the ruler of Khorezm fled to the north in 712, sought refuge from the Turks, and fought against the Muslims with their help in 728-729 [11: 143 (1253), 217 (1525)]. In these phrases, Tabari points out that the north of Khorezm, that is, the lower basins of the Syr Darya, is the land of the Turks. As a matter of fact, not only the population of the northern borders of the middle basin of the Syrdarya, i.e. Otror and its surroundings, but also the majority of the population of the regions to the west were composed of Turks[2:77]. Ethnotoponyms also testify to this. In particular, the following place names can be added to Turkish toponyms: Mingbuloq, Otror, Yangikent, Sutkand, Sayram, Karachuk, Atlakh, Khurlug, Jumishlagu, Signoq, Talos, and others.

However, K. Akishev, a supporter of the views of the Soviet Union era, interprets the settlements of people living in the middle basin of the Syrdarya in the early Middle Ages as the product of the activities of Iranian-speaking ethnic groups, and K. Baypakov, following the footsteps of S.G. Klyashtorni, "misconceived that these places were the homeland of the Turks." criticizes [4:39-42]. K. Akishev's criticism is therefore unfounded, even in the 2nd and 1st millennia, the middle basin of the Syrdarya and even in its northwestern regions have been inhabited by Turkic ethnic groups for a long time. V.V. Bartold, who sided with Iranian languages in this matter, also decided the historical truth in favor of the Turks and wrote that the river "Daix"



(Daiks) recorded in the Greek sources of the 2nd century AD is related to the hydronym "Yaiq" used in the Turkish language in the Middle Ages [22: 29].

In fact, in the IV-VI centuries AD, Turkic tribes such as Utigur (thirty Oghuz), Kutrigur (nine Oghuz), Hun, Barsil, Savir, Bulgar, Khazar lived in the steppes between the Caspian and the Black seas, and their languages formed the corresponding dialects of the ancient Turkic languages [26 :81-86, 12:100-101].

M.I. Filanovich clarified his previous views in the following years and noted that although the official language of the oasis was one of the Sugdian dialects in ancient times, at the same time, the Turkish language was also spoken in the oasis, and its influence was increasing [17:22-26, 15:33]. The oasis is also characterized by the presence of bilingualism and the strong ethnocultural influence of the southern regions. The use of the Sugdian language in Choch as an official written language (even in the Bugut and Ili inscriptions of the Turkish Khanate) was related to the position of the Sugdian language as the "language of international trade" and "the language of international transactions" in the networks of the "Great Silk Road". In this regard, the service of the Sughd trade factories was incomparably great. Therefore, the position of this language in the Choch oasis at the state level can be explained by the same factors [2:84].

Some historian-archaeologists and ancient numismatists and Sogdians, academicians N. Negmatov, Yu. Yakubov, A. Muhammadjonov, E. Rtveladze, candidate of historical sciences M. Filanovich, etc., formed in the imagination of pro-Iranianism, the language of the inhabitants of the Choch oasis in the ancient and early Middle Ages was Sogdian. They believe that the word "choch" means "stone" and "mountain" in the Sogdian language. As a matter of fact, there is no indication in any of the Sugdian studies that the word "Choch" means "stone" in the Sugdian language [2:85]. On the contrary, there is evidence that the ancient Choch language is different from the Sugdian language of Samarkand and Bukhara. Arab geographer Muqaddasiy (10th century) notes that the language of the people of Choch is the most beautiful among the Hailat languages [21:333]. Also, Xuan Tsian and Khoi Chao say that the language of the Ferghana people, who are historically and culturally closest to the Choch region, is different from the language of the neighboring population [5:16-17]. This situation makes it possible to explain the leadership of the Turkic language in the Ferghana Valley in the VII century [16:13].

In the Chinese annals, the language of Yeda (Hephthalites) was recorded as a separate language, not similar to Zhujan, Gaogyu (Uighur), Hu (Turkic) [7:268]. However, there are disputes among scholars regarding the language of the Ephthalites. One group of scholars includes the Ephthalian language in the family of Iranian languages (Enoki, Litvinsky, Negmatov, Livshchits, etc.), while another group of scholars includes it in the family of Turkic languages (Bernshtam, Shaniozov, Askarov, Boboyorov, etc.). It is also known that most scholars consider the Halaj Turks who lived in Afghanistan in the Middle Ages as the next generations of the Ephthalites [27:10-16]. The linguist G.Dörfer scientifically proved that the language of a small number of Halajs living in Iran is an archaic version of the Turkic language of the time of the Turkish khanate [24:410-420]. Nowadays, there are many people who include the language of Choch people in the family of Iranian languages, but a word pattern that clearly confirms it is still abstract. The few preserved names and toponyms do not allow us to make a specific conclusion about it [2:87]. Because the place names clarifying this issue are found in both languages (Turkish and Sugdian).

The names Gan, Mohedu, Kyule, Inye Chabishi mentioned in the Chinese chronicles as the names of Choch rulers (belonging to the VII-VIII centuries) were restored by the researchers in the form of Tun, Bahadur, Kulug, Inal, Chabish on a Turkic basis and considered them as epithets or titles [23:140, 28:103, 3:59-60]. Even Yu.A. Zuev restores the name Nye, the ruler of Choch in 605, in the form of Inal on a Turkish basis [10:94].

The above-mentioned scientific views, hypotheses and their scientific analysis show that the native inhabitants of the Choch oasis, who lived until the Bronze Age, spoke the Sughd dialect of ancient Iranian languages. Since the Late Bronze Age, Turkic-speaking ethnic groups from the Eurasian steppes began to enter the whole of Central Asia, including the Choch oasis. Due to this, the Turkic ethnos appeared in Central Asia, especially in the districts of the middle basins of the Syrdarya. According to the analysis of archaeological and anthropological materials, the wave of their entry into this region was not limited to one or two stages. The migration of ethnic groups from the north-east of the region to its south-west takes on a permanent character. This is evidenced by the meeting of "South Siberian type" anthropological materials from the early Iron Age in the northern regions of Central Asia. Migration processes especially in antiquity, that is, BC. During the 3rd and 5th centuries AD, it became so strong that, on the one hand, the Sarmatians entered this land, and on the other hand, the Huns entered the region from the north-east, even in ancient written sources.

Their confirmation on the basis of archaeological materials left its bright ethnocultural traces in the composition of Qovunchi culture in the Choch oasis. By the time of Antiquity, the influence of the Turkic ethnic group increased not only in the lower basins of the Syrdarya (Jetiasar culture), but also in its middle basin, that is, in the Tashkent oasis and South Kazakhstan regions,



as a result of which the Choch dialect of the ancient Sogdian language was formed [15:33]. Its roots were formed on the basis of mutual mixing and syncretization of the Turkic and Sogdian languages. As an ethno-cultural product of this ethnic mixture, the Kangar people, and the Kangar state as its ethno-political state union, emerged in the Choch oasis. This state is called Kanguy in Chinese chronicles, and based on its etymological meaning, the Turkic term "Choch" means "stone", "precious stone", "turquoise stone" has found its scientific confirmation.

CONCLUSION

In ancient times, the appearance of the Turkic ethnic group in the Tashkent oasis dates back to the Late Bronze Age, and its rise to the top position in terms of ethno-economic, ethno-cultural and ethno-political aspects took place in antiquity. Contrary to the spirit of historiography of the Former Soviet Union period, the term Choch, which gave an ethnic attribute to the oasis, is the ancient Turkic "tas", as its translation, the name of the oasis, which was first mentioned as Kanguy, Yuni, Zheshi, Shi in Chinese hieroglyphs, from the 5th century AD, meant stone, turquoise stone. This land, known in ancient written sources throughout the Eastern world for its turquoise stone deposits and precious stone reserves, was called "Choch country" in the language of its inhabitants.

From the 11th century AD, in the works of Beruni and Mahmud Kashgari, Choch oasis and the name of its capital city were mentioned as Tashkent oasis, Tashkent city, according to its originality. So, in ancient times, its people were Sogdian and Turkic-speaking, and since ancient times, the process of linguistic Turkification among the Sogdian layer of the oasis population has been accelerating. As a result, in the early Middle Ages, the Turkic-Sogdian ethno-cultural and ethno-political space was formed in the middle basins of the Syrdarya, and the fundamental basis of the Uzbek people was built in the image of the settled Kangar people [1:393]. It is the middle basins of the Syrdarya, based on the mixture of its Turkic and Sogdian-speaking inhabitants, that the anthropological type of the Uzbek people "Type between the two rivers of Central Asia" is formed, and the Kang state union is formed based on the ancient local statehood that has entered the path of development in the Turkic spirit.

REFERENCES

1. Асқаров А. *Ўзбек халқининг келиб чиқиши тарихи*. – Т.: "Ўзбекистон", 2019.
2. Бобоёров Ғ. *Чоч тарихидан лавҳалар*. – Т.: 2010.
3. Бабаяров Г. *Древнетюркские монеты Чачского оазиса (VI-VIII вв.)* – Т.: 2007.
4. Байпаков К.М. *Средневековые города Казахстана на Шёлковом пути*. – Алма-Аты, 1998.
5. Бернштам А.Н. *Древняя Фергана (научно-популярный очерк)*. АН УЗССР, – Т.: 1951.
6. Бернштам А.Н. *Тюрки и Средняя Азия в описании Хой Чао (726) // ВДИ*. – М., 1952. – № 1.
7. Бичурин Н.Я. *Собрание сведений о народах, обитавших в Средней Азии в древние времена. В трёх томах. Том II*. – М., – Л., 1950.
8. Буяков Ю.Ф. *К динамике развития городской культуры древнего и средневекового Чача. «Материалы научной конференции «Чач-Бинкет-Ташкент (историческое прошлое и современность)»* – Т.: 2007.
9. *Древние авторы о Средней Азии*. – Т.: 1940.
10. Зуев Б.А. *Ранние тюрки: очерки истории и идеологии*. – Алма-аты, 2002.
11. *История ат-Табари. Избранные отрывки (Перевод с арабского В.И. Беляева. Дополнение к переводу О.Г. Большакова и А.Б. Халилова*. –Т.: Фан, 1987.
12. Комар А. *Наследие тюркских каганатов в Восточной Европе // Культурное наследие*. – Астана, 2009. – № 1.
13. Максудов Ф., Бабаяров Г. *К этимологии топонима Чач. "Столице Узбекистана Ташкенту 2200 лет" Труды международной научной конференции*. – Т.: 2009.
14. Махмуд Қошғарий. *Девону луғотит турк. (Таржимон ва наишра тайёрловчи С.М. Муталлибов)*. Том 1. – Т.: 1960.
15. Мукминова Р.Г. *Филанович М.И. Ташкент на перекрёстке истории (Очерки древней и средневековой истории города)*. – Т.: Фан, 2001.
16. Отахўжаев А. *Илк ўрта асрлар Марказий Осиё цивилизациясида турк-суғд муносабатлари*. – Т.: 2010.
17. Филанович М.И. *Древняя и средневековая история Ташкента в археологических источниках*. – Т.: 2010.
18. Хўжаев А. *Сўғдийларнинг Хитойга бориб қолиши // Мозийдан садо*. –Т.: 2002. – № 2.
19. Хўжаев А. *Хитой манбаларида суғдларга оид айрим маълумотлар // Ozbekiston tarixi*. – Т.: 2004. – № 1.
20. Шониёзов К.Ш. *Қанғ давлати ва қанғлилар*. – Т.: Фан, 1990.
21. *Al-Moqaddasi. Descriptio Imperii moslemici, ed. M.J. de Goeje, BGA, pars 3. Lugduni Batavorum*, 1967.
22. *Barthold V.V. Orta Asya Türk Tarihi Dersleri*. – Ankara, 2004.
23. *Chavannes E. Documents sur les Tou-Kiue(turks) occidentaux. Сборник трудов Орхонской экспедиции. Вып. 6. СПб. 1903.*
24. *Doerfer G. Lexik und Sprachgeographie des Chaladsch*. – Wiesbaden, 1987.
25. *Ekmekçi E. Hsiian-Tsang Seyahetnamesi'ne göre Türkistan. Basilmamiş doctora tezi. Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü*. – Ankara, 2003.
26. *Golden P.B. Türk halkları tarihine Giriş. Çev. O. Karatay*. – Ankara, 2002.
27. *Inaba M. The Identity of the Turkish Rulersto the South of Hindukush from the 7 th to the 9 th Centuries A.D.* – Zinbun, 2005. – № 38.
28. *Skaff K.J. Western Turk Rule of Turkestans Oases in the Sixth through Eighth Centuries "The Turks", 2*, – Ankara, 2002. – № 23.