MAKALE ⊕ ARTICLE

KHWAJA AHMAD YASAWİ'S TOPONYMİC HERİTAGE

HOCA AHMET YESEVİ'NİN TOPONİMİK MİRASI

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Abstract

This paper represents the results of the pioneering research work that studied the toponymic heritage of real historical personality like Ahmad Yasawi. It proposed that the name-giver of the city of Turkestan is Ahmad Yasawi by means of conducting intensive toponymic research and by considering Ahmad Yasawi's '*Diwan-i Hikmat*' and Suleyman Baqirgani's '*Aqirzaman*' as historical documents. Also the research paper analyzes the legends and stories related to the life of Ahmad Yasawi by Bolatbek Qorganbekov and Mashkhur Zhusup as the toponymic legends, which can be considered as etymological foundations of some place names. The author of the current research work made the classification of Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage, which can be regarded as the first classification of historical personality's toponymic heritage suggested by scholars. Moreover, the research work discovers Ahmad Yasawi's deed from a new angle. All place names, which are regarded as the toponymic heritage of Ahmad Yasawi, were divided into three main groups. They are as following: 1. The place names whose author was Ahmad Yasawi himself; 2. Ahmad Yasawi's, his relatives', and followers' graveyards, which are considered here as sacral places of Kazakhstan, and also they are nekronyms that can be accepted as toponymic heritage of Yasawi; 3. The place names which appeared under the influence of Yasawi's relatives and followers. The total number of toponyms that are classified as Yasawi's toponymic heritage is 33. They are 13 econyms, 2 hydronyms, one oronym, and 17 nekronyms.

Keywords: Toponym, Toponymic Heritage, Nekronym, Hydronym, Econym, Intensive Toponymy, Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi, Turkestan.

Öz

Bu makale, Hoca Ahmet Yesevi gibi ünlü bir tarihi şahsiyetin toponimik mirasını kapsamlı bir şekilde inceleyen ilk bilimsel araştırmadır. Bu çalışmada Ahmet Yesevi'nin "*Divan-ı Hikmet*"i ve Süleyman Bakyrgani'nin "*Ahirzaman*" adlı eseri toponimi araştırma konusu olarak ele alınarak, Türkistan şehrini isimlendiren kişinin Ahmet Yesevi olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca Bolatbek Korganbekov ve Meşhür Cüsüp tarafından derlenen Hoca Ahmet Yesevi'nin hayatıyla ilgili efsaneler, bazı yer adlarının etimolojik kökenini dikkate alan yer adları efsanesi olarak incelenmektedir. Bununla birlikte, çalışmada Hoca Ahmet Yesevi gibi önemli bir mutasavvıfın toponimik mirası incelenip sınıflandırması sunulmuştur. Böylece Ahmet Yesevi'nin eserlerine yeni bir açıdan bakılmıştır. Ahmet Yesevi'nin toponimik mirası olarak kabul edilen yer ve su adları üç ana gruba ayrılmıştır. Bunlar: 1. Yazarı Ahmet Yesevi'ye ait olan yer ve su adları; 2. Ahmet Yesevi'nin toponimik mirası sayılan Kazakistan'ın kutsal yerleri listesinde yer alan nekronimler, Ahmet Yesevi, akrabaları ve müritlerinin türbeleri; 3. Ahmet Yesevi'nin akrabaları ve müritlerinin etkisi altında ortaya çıkan yer ve su adlarıdır. Çalışmanın bulgularına göre Yesevî'nin toponimik mirası olarak toplam 33 yer-su ismi ele alınmıştır. Bunlardan on üçünün ekonomi, ikisinin hidronim, birinin oronim ve on yedisinin de nekronim olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toponim, Toponim Mirası, Nekronim, Hidronim, Ekonomi, Yoğun Toponimi, Hoca Ahmet Yesevi, Türkistan.

Introduction

Language is formed during the long process of giving names to every creature, action, quality, abstract thing, etc. Every word is a name that was given by our ancestors. Every nation that inhabited a definite place at a definite time used to give names to the things that they saw, heard, touched, and used during the process of studying the world that surrounded them. As a result, they unconsciously built vocabularies and word-stocks of their own language.

If nowadays some scholars such as Richards and Schmidt (2010, 311) define language as the tool or system of interpersonal verbal communication, then it can be said that language is the stock of names which we use to refer to actions, things, creatures, quality, appearance, and so on. In linguistics, a name can be defined as the word which we use when we mention a particular creature or when we address that particular creature. And linguistics study personal names, therefore it is worth mentioning that linguistics study names of people, places, things, etc.

When people give birth to their children, they name them, and for the majority of their lives, people will not remember who gave them those names. Such things are not considered to have importance. The same phenomenon can be noticed in the case of toponyms. Except for a few scholars like Tent and Blair, most people aren't interested identifying the authors of particular place names that emerged on geographical maps. In their work that related to toponomastics, they defined "intensive toponymy" as a method that aims to gather an in-depth understanding of a particular toponym by closely investigating the history and nature of a single toponym or of a small, focused sample of toponyms (Blair & Tent, 2021, 1). Tent (2015, 71) stated that in extensive toponymy, place names function as independent variables that can be tested against dependent variables such as region, toponym type, or feature type.

The meaning of place names, their functions, and the motivations for naming places were always the main subjects of toponymic research. The Australian National Placenames Survey feels the terms "quantitative" and "qualitative" are too general and vague. Therefore, they adopted the following terms to reflect and denote more precisely the two research approaches it takes: intensive and extensive toponymy. And intensive toponymy is a qualitative research method which is done by responding to the below-mentioned questions related the place names (Tent, 2015):

1- Who named the place?
2- When was the place named?
3- Why was it given this particular name?
4- What does the name mean? What kind of feature is it?
5- Where does the name come from? (referring to either the language or region of origin); Where is the place located?

And these intensive toponymic research questions may help us identify the historical role and significance of toponym name-givers. From history, it is obvious that people who gave the name to particular geographical objects were not average people, they were historical figures whom people will remember for ages. For example, one of these historical figures is Alexander the Great. The ancient Macedonian king and conqueror who named many cities after himself, including Alexandria in Egypt, Alexandria-of-the-Areians, and Alexandria Eshate (Morkot, 1996). Skelton and Dell

said (2005) that Alexander founded 57 ancient cities, and such historical facts underlie the importance of intensive toponymy. The paper aims to study the literary works of Ahmad Yasawi, "*Diwani-i Hikmat*," and Suleyman Baqirgani's "*Aqirzaman*" and legends about the life of Ahmad Yasawi, which were collected by Qorganbekov (2011), Zhandarbek (2006), and Kamalova (2020), to find out which toponyms' name-giver was Ahmad Yasawi, and to suggest the classification of Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage.

1. Theoretical Background

A place name, however, is more than just a word or words that describe a type of feature (Randall, 2001, 4). Place names are windows into the history and characteristics of a country. They reflect the migrations of peoples, their religious and cultural traditions, local languages, conquests, fortifications long since disappeared, topography and even industrial development (Everett-Heath, 2000). Place names or in another words geographical names are referred as a part of cultural heritage – because they have often been verbally transferred for centuries. They are also perceived as human footprints in the cultural landscape, i.e. the "fossilised" evidence of human activity and culture because they contain trace of socio-economic activity, and past and contemporary cultures (Crljenko, 2020, 60). A geographical name contains information on a given community's worldview, on the views of the name giver(s), and on the characteristics of the geographical feature that were thought to be essential for its marking and evalution at a certain moment (Crljenko, 2017, 82). Because of such a historical, cultural, linguistic value they were always objects of studies which were conducted by different scholars such as Stewart (1954), Tent (2015), Tent and Blair (2011). All those research works belong to the branch of linguistics and onomastics, which is called 'toponomastics', and which studies the place names (Hough, 2016). So in toponomastics place names are also called toponyms, and toponymy, whereas place name is called toponym.

Bell (2014, 731) stated that toponyms need to be treated with the same respect as archaeological artifacts. Tent and Slatyer (2009, 5) also mentioned that on every map we may find a wealth of historical, cultural, and linguistic information frozen in the names that people have given to places. Toponyms may also offer insights into the belief and value systems of those who bestowed the names, and are rich sources of information about a region's history of exploration and settlement, as well as its linguistic and social history (Tent, 2006, 372).

And Kovács (2019, 124) states that historians often rely on toponyms as coordinates in their attempts to map the ethnic composition of an area in the past. This statement proves the idea that one of the historical values of toponyms is the fact that they may contain the data about the act of moving and inhabiting of particular nation or group of people in a given geographical area. The idea which lays on the bases of the toponymic heritage of historical personalities. Voronina et al. (2019, 79) have also said that the act of carrying structural-word formational analysis of toponymic units, may lead to the revealing the data about national specifics of the particular nation. Generally, onomastics the sub-discipline of linguistics which studies all kind of names undoubtedly has closest ties with historical research (Rácz & Tóth, 2019, 105). It always considers linguistics in a close connection with history and culture.

The term 'toponymic heritage' has been already considered by Coates (2020, 187), but in his research about the toponymic heritage of ancient Europe. The current research examines toponymic heritage of a particular historical personality.

2. Methods and Data

The paper represents the results of an in-depth study of the data, therefore the results were gained utilizing qualitative research. The underlying moment is the fact that the research is based on the modified type of qualtitative research, which was refered as intensive toponymy (Tent, 2015).

In his research Tent attempted to analyze the research methods of conducting the research study of place names. Tent (2015, 67-68) stated that performing intensive toponymy is the same as writing the biography of the place names. It helps the scientists to identify the information about the person who gave the particular name as the name to the particular place.

As far as intensive toponymy is relied on the documentary evidences, the research applies one of the four basic types of data collection procedures of qualitative research, which was defined as the research of collecting qualitative document (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, 262-263). The particular data gathering method identified documentary evidences of the research. And the main sources of the data are Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi's '*Diwan-i Hikmat*' (Yassawi, 1993), Suleyman Baqirgani's '*Aqirzaman*' (Baqirgani, 2008), Qorganbekov's 'Khozha Akhmet Yassawi esimimen bailanysty angyz, apsana, hikaialar. Ekinshi basylym'[*in English.* The legends related to Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi's life. Second edition] (Qorganbekov, 2011), Zhandarbekov's 'Yassawi zholy zhane qazaq qogamy' [*in English.* Yasawi's path and kazakh society] (Zhandarbekov, 2006), and Kamalova's 'Qazaqstannyng kieli jerleri'[*in English.* Sacral places of Kazakhstan] (Kamalova, 2020).

If Ahmad Yasawi's '*Diwan-i Hikmat*' and Suleymen Bakirgani's '*Aqirzaman*' are analyzed here as historical artifacts, while Qorganbekov's, Zhandarbekov's research works are presented as documents coinciding to the definition of the term document, where it is stated that documents are literary, textual or visual devices that enable information to be shared and 'stories' to be presented (Flick, 2014, 369). The fifth source of the data is used during the process of classifying the toponymic heritage of Ahmad Yasawi as a catalog of sacred places in the territory of Kazakhstan. And the process of classifying Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage as the data analysis of qualitative research was used to show the actuality of the current research. Because without classifying the data, we have no way of knowing what is it that we are analyzing. And classifying the data builds the conceptual foundations for analysis (Dey, 2005, 41). The documentary evidences of the particular research were analyzed through intensive toponymy.

Below-mentioned issues were clarified as the research questions,

1- Did Ahmad Yasawi leave toponymic heritage after himself?
2- Can Ahmad Yasawi be considered as the «name-giver» of the name of the city Turkestan?

3. The Toponymic Signature of Ahmad Yasawi (The Reflection of The Value of Yasawi's Study)

The descendant of Ali Ibn Abu Talib and his son Muhammad Hanafia (Yassawi, 1993, 7), the scholar who was named 'Mentor of Turkestan', the spiritual father of all Turkish people (Qorganbekov, 2001, 3), the founder of Turkish sufi school which was named after him (Zhandarbek, 2006, 6). All these descriptions are about one outstanding person of all Turkish people of all times whose name was Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi. Ahmad Yasawi's spiritual activities as the founder of first Turkish Sufi tradition were considered by Kenzhetayev and Tan (2020). As Zhandarbek they also considered Yassawi as the first Sufi of Turkish culture (Kenzhetayev & Tan, 2020, 335).

All his life Ahmad Yasawi tried to spread Islam among Turkish people. He attempted to accomplish this act in the most comprehensible way for his people. His masterpiece '*Diwan-i Hikmat*' (Divine Wisdom) reveals the way how he became the person who he was and the way how he taught the main rules of Islam 'sharigat' in close connection with traditions of Turkish people. And he called such acceptance of Islam 'tariqat'. Khwaja Ahmad's 'Divine Wisdom' is regarded as one of the oldest and most important works of religious Sufism Turkish literature and examined in terms of education of values by Türküresin (2021, 267).

Hasan (2012, 151) stated that Ahmad Yasawi was an important personality in the spiritual history of Turkish people for centuries, and he mentioned about Ahmad Yasawi's great contribution to the development of Turkish languages, literature and culture. Gürer (2017, 40) noticed that Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi earned reputation as the Peer of Turkestan and affected enormously to Turkish people to become Muslims, and to shape their religious ideas. Ahmad Yasawi mentioned about his deeds at the very beginning of his work 'Divine Wisdom' in the below-mentioned translated lines.

> With the name of Allah, All Mighty, and Merciful.
> I told the wisdom, spreading the jewels and diamonds of knowledge to each follower,
> I tried all my best going through the unbearable passage of suffer.
> And now I am opening the pages of book which I regard the second after prophet's one
> (Yasawi, 1993, 17).

Here Ahmad Yasawi underlined the moment where he raised Islam among Turkish people, Islam which he thought will be accepted among his people. Nowadays plenty of researches devoted to the issue of discovering the importance of his labor as a spreader of Islam are being done. Yasawi's influence to the Kazakh literature and culture was considered by Kerimbai et al. (2022), his importance and role as a historical figure was analyzed by Zhandarbek (2006), the contribution of his 'Diwan-i Hikmat' to the Kazakh literature was studied was studied by Qyraubaeva (2008), Kelimbetov (2005), and Zhubanov (2010).

Ahmad Yasawi is famous for his main significant three deeds. They are,

1- As one of the famous Turkish sufies Ahmad Yasawi tried to explain Islam and Sufism in his Hikmets in the Turkish language. It was the re-flourishing of the Turkish language.
2- Most of the Turkish people converted into Islam because of Ahmad Yasawi's influences and because of the chain of his students and followers.
3- Ahmad Yasawi built the base of Turkic-Muslim culture in the territory of modern Middle and Minor Asia, in Balkan and Eastern Europe.

These are the main tendencies of Ahmad Yasawi's deeds, which are considered by most of the scholars (Kenzhetayev & Zhandarbek, 2017, 78).

Still, when studying Ahmad Yasawi's works and papers of above mentioned scholars who studied about Yasawi, it can be noticed that Ahmad Yasawi was not considered as the «name-giver» of some place names which exist on the map of the modern world. Only a few legends survived, which state that Yasawi gave the name to the river Syrdaria. This is the first research which proposed the classification of Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage. The classification includes not just the place names that appeared under Ahmad Yasawi's influence but also all place names which appeared under the influence of Ahmad Yasawi's relatives, students and followers. This paper is the first scientific research work that thoroughly analyzes the toponymic heritage of one historical person. Thus, all place names which were included in the toponymic heritage of Ahmad Yasawi were divided into three main groups. They are given in (Table 1).

Table 1: The classification of Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage.

Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage		
The place-names «name-giver» of which was Ahmad Yasawi himself	Ahmad Yasawi's, his relatives', students' and followers' cemeteries, mosques and mausoleums	The place-names that appeared under the influence of Ahmad Yasawi's relatives, students and followers
The city of Turkestan; The hydronym Syrdariya; The oronym Maslikhat tobe.	The mausoleum of Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi; The mausoleum of Arystan Bab; The mausoleum of Ibrakhim Ata; The mausoleum of Qarashash Ana; The mausoleum of Makhmutkhan Sheikh Baba; The mausoleum of Gaukhar Ana; The mausoleum of Qarabura; The mausoleum of Baba Tukty Aziz; The mausoleum of Khorasan Ata; Beket Ata's underground mosque on the place of Ogulandy; Shopan Ata underground mosque; The mosque of Shaqpaq Ata; The underground mosque of Sultan Upi; Zangiata Mausoleum; The mausoleum of Qoshqar Ata; Haji Bektash Veli Complex; The mausoleum of Aisha bibi.	The settlement of Turkibasi; the city Osh; The settlement of Zangiata; The city Qoshqar Ata; The town Hacıbektaş; The village named after Qoshqar Ata; The river Qoshqar; The settlement of Baqirgan;

The first place name the name-giver of which is proposed here to be Ahmad Yasawi is the name of the city Turkestan. This city was the heart of Yasawi's sufi school. Generally during the IV-X centuries the place was named Shavgar and it was a little settlement. In the XII-XIV centuries during Ahmad Yasawi's life time it turned from a settlement into a town and was named Yassi. This fact can easily be noticed from the Arabic naming system of giving names to people related to their birth places, as in the cases of great scholars like Sakikh Al-Bukhari, who was from Bukhara, Abu-Nasr Al-Farabi, who was from the city Farab. But Ahmad Yasawi's birth place was another settlement, it was Sairam (Qyraubaeva, 2008, 76). Yassi was the city where Khwaja Ahmad lived and spread his ideas (Kelimbetov, 2005, 226).

The literature review as the secondary research method of exploratory research disclosed a lack of information about the history of the name of the city Turkestan. Only the fact that this name implies that it is the country and the capital of the Turkish people (Zherinin aty – Elinin haty, 2010). And that the name started to be mentioned after the Mongol Invasion (Kenzhetayev & Zhandarbek, 2017, 26) and no other kind of detailed information about the name Turkestan. Hence, such exploratory research can be fulfilled by the usage of intensive toponymy, by the usage of qualitative research in the sphere of toponomastics, which assist to write the biography of place names by responding previously mentioned five questions. And this kind of research may create a hypothesis regarding to the name-giver of the city Turkestan based on the literary works like '*Diwan-i Hikmat*' and '*Aqirzaman*'. Using the method which is known as intensive toponymy, when reading Ahmad Yasawi's Divine Wisdom led to the suggestion that Khwaja Ahmad was the first man who used the name Turkestan for the town of Yassi.

"On altymda barlyq aruaq ules berdi,
Aikhai, Sizge mubarrak dep adam keldi.
Perzentim dep moinym qushyp konilim tapty,
On zhetimde **Turkistanda** turdym mine." (Yasawi, 1993, 24).

In Kazakh transliterated into English alphabet

"I was blessed by all the saints at sixteen,
People started to follow me, the sign of flourishing it seemed,
It was when I lived in **Turkestan**, when I was seventeen"

Authors' translation of given lines.

In nineteenth *Hikmet*,

"Musapirlik basqa tusse jetiledi pispegender,
Dana qylar, myqty qylar omir jolin otpegendi.
Tapsa tagam, kir tonnan kier zhetpegennen,
Sonyng ushin **Turkistanga** keldim mine." (Yasawi, 1993, 52).

In Kazakh transliterated into English alphabet

"Helplessness will mature man when he face it,
It makes man wiser, it makes stronger them who didn't walk their lives' path with their feet.
They will eat and wear the things because of need,
That is why I came to **Turkestan** to live."

Authors' translation of given lines.

It is easily noticed that instead of saying Yassi in his work, Ahmad Yasawi uses the name Turkestan, which now can prove that Ahmad Yasawi is the name-giver of Turkestan. And that was the answer to the first question of intensive toponymy.

Also, as was stated before the name Turkestan is mentioned in historical documents only after the Mongol Invasion. And Ahmad Yasawi lived before the Mongol Invasion. It leads to thoughts that may be after Ahmad Yasawi's work people started to refer to the settlement where Yasawi lived as Turkestan, because Yasawi was

the person who had a great influence on the nomadic Turkish culture of all Turkish people. He was the man who was treated as 'Pir-i Turkistan' (Türküresin, 2021) and as 'The Sultan of all Saints' (Bopaiuly et.al., 2022, 242). And if the king like Alexander the Great used to give names to the cities then it is obvious that 'Sultan of all Saints' and 'Pir-i Turkestan' could afford himself to name the city, which thanks to him became spiritual and religious capital of all Turkish people as 'The country of all Turkish people' or in another words 'Turkestan'.

The answer to the second question which asks "When was the place name given to a particular geographical object or location" is that it was given when writing his masterpiece called Divine Wisdom. The answer to the third question, which asks "Why was the particular place name given to the particular geographical object or location?" defines the role of Ahmad Yasawi as a historical personality. Because he spread Islam in the Turkish language to the Turkish people in this area, he wanted to name this city the country of Turkish people. Also this above-mentioned fact can be regarded as the answer to the fourth and fifth questions of intensive toponymy.

Another literary work that can also be used as evidence is Suleyman Baqirgani's '*Aqirzaman*'. Baqirgani was one of the best students of Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi. Following lines of his masterpiece proves that after Khwaja Ahmad, people who followed his Islamic path used to name Yassi as Turkestan.

> "Otyz ush myng tariqat,
> Gishygyng birla bolar shad,
> ***Turkistanda*** Khozha Akhmed,
> Barshaga bir sana dur." (Baqirgani, 2008, 304).

> "Thirty-three thousand tariqats,
> Are the ways of being with the one God.
> And Khwaja Ahmad of ***Turkestan***,
> Is the one wisdom jewel for all of us."

> Or in following lines,
> "***Turkistanga*** baraik,
> Qyzmetinde bolaik,
> Ules berse alaik,
> Shaiqym Akhmed Yassawi" (Baqirgani, 2008, 387).

> "Let's go to ***Turkestan***,
> Let's serve and follow him,
> Let's take our share,
> From our Mentor Ahmad Yasawi."

The next two place names the 'name giver' of which, as one of the aqyns of Kazakh people Mashkhur Zhusup suggested was Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi, are hydronym Syrdariya and oronym Maslikhat tobe. Mashkhur Zhusup stated that once Khwaja Ahmad invited his ninety nine thousand followers to the hill near the river Seihun to say that during our prophet's visit to heaven where he had a conversation with Allah, they discussed a lot of things with each other, and that no one alive knows about them. Then Khwaja Ahmad asked from his every follower to give a word of

wisdom for the future generation based on their experience of living a life in this world. He explained that the wisdom of his followers must remain as the shadow of prophets' and Allah's speech in heaven (Zhandarbek, 2006, 45). The wisdom of Steppe was founded as a result of this event.

Ahmad Yasawi's and his followers' wisdom nowadays is converted into proverbs of Kazakh people. After that occasion Yasawi and his followers named that particular hill "Maslikhat tobe", in English it means "The hill of the council". This is because Ahmad Yasawi wanted to deliver the conversation between Allah and our prophet as words of wisdom to people. And the nearby river was named Syrdariya, which means the water of secret in the Kazakh language (Zhandarbek, 2006, 45). These three place names built the first group of Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage.

The second group of Khwaja Ahmad's toponymic heritage includes seventeen nekronyms. A term nekronym is defined as a name of churchyard, cemetery, graveyard (Kladnik et al., 2020, 15). And nekronyms which were classified in this article as Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage are cemeteries and graveyards of Khwaja Ahmad and his followers. All these nekronyms became the places where people use to pilgrimage. The Islamic worldview of Turkish people used to believe that these places and pilgrimage to these places would make people's wishes come true. They are,

1- The mausoleum of Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi.
2- The mausoleum of Arystan Bab.
3- The mausoleum of Ibrakhim Ata.
4- The mausoleum of Qarashash Ana.
5- The mausoleum of Makhmutkhan Sheikh Baba.
6- The mausoleum of Gaukhar Ana.
7- The mausoleum of Qarabura.
8- The mausoleum of Baba Tukty Aziz.
9- The mausoleum of Khorasan Ata.
10- Beket Ata's underground mosque on the place of Ogulandy.
11- Shopan Ata underground mosque.
12- The mosque of Shaqpaq Ata.
13- The underground mosque of Sultan Upi.
14- Zangiata Mausoleum.
15- The mausoleum of Qoshqar Ata.
16- Haji Bektash Veli Complex.
17- The mausoleum of Aisha Bibi.

All these sacred places are the resting places of the saints who once spread the knowledge and seeds of Turkish Islam which in this paper is regarded to be integral part of the nomadic culture of all Turkish tribes. All of them were connected to Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi, some of them were his relatives, some were his students, and some were his followers. The historical, cultural and spiritual values of all these sacred places are familiar to all Turkish people.

The connection of all these people to Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi was considered during the research study. Description of connection between Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi and above mentioned saints are introduced below.

1- Arystan Bab is known as his mentor and as the father of one of his best students

Mansur Ata (Kelimbetov, 2005).

2- Ibrakhim Ata was Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi's father and he was a sheikh. He had the ability to predict and he had a gift of healing diseases (Kamalova, 2020, 44).

3- Qarashash Ana was his mother and one of the first women who tried to translate the Quran into the Turkish language (Kamalova, 2020, 44).

4- Makhmutkhan Sheikh Baba was one of Khwaja Ahmad's ancestors. He spread Islam among Turkish people before Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi. He is known as the "name-giver" of Tulkibasy. Before his death Makhmutkhan Sheikh Baba left a covenant to bury him to the place from where Turkish people started to live as a tribe on their own. In another words he wanted to be buried near to the place where Turkish people started their life as a tribe in this world. And one of the variants of the name of Tulkibasi is 'Turkibasi' in Kazakh it may mean 'the start of Turks' or 'The head of the Turks' (Kamalova, 2020, 45). This place is near to Turkestan, a city that was named by Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi as the country of Turkish people. Nearby to the above-mentioned places, another very interesting place, Qazyqurt, is located. During the studies, the etymology of this place was interpreted as 'genuine wolf'. This impression was made by separating the name of this particular place into two roots, the first is 'qas' which in Kazakh can means 'genuine' and 'kurt' which in Turkish is 'Wolf'. This place is situated in a locality which is believed by the modern inhabitants of Minor Asia to be their Motherland, as their 'Atazhurt'. And now after all these given data, it can be easily understood why our ancestors named the place Qazyqurt, which gives the meaning 'genuine wolf' in English because they wanted to convey that this place is one of the places which is considered as the motherland of Turkish people. Our ancestors believed that the mother of all Turkish people was a wolf. That is what is thought to be the reason for giving such a name to the geographical object which Turkish people regarded as their motherland.

5- The next historical person whose mausoleum belongs to the toponymic heritage of Khwaja Ahmad is his daughter Gaukhar Ana. She had a gift of healing people from different diseases (Kamalova, 2020, 46). Nowadays her resting place is mostly visited by women who wish to conceive a child.

6- Qarabura was one of the saints who influenced the process of spreading Islam in Middle Asia. He was the person who buried Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi according to the norms of Islam (Kamalova, 2020, 47).

7- Baba Tukty Aziz was Khwaja Ahmad's great grandfather's most trusted man. Khwaja Ahmad's great grandfather Ysqaq bab, Abdizhalil bab's brother and the son of Abdirakhman bab once ruled the city Sham. Ysqaq bab and his brother Abdizhalil bab, who is also known as Qorasan Ata came to Middle Asia to establish Islam. When faced with local tribes Ysqaq bab decided not to fight with them, but to spread Islam without war. After that he tried to convince the heads of local tribes to help him during such kind of important event. And one of the heads of local tribes who started to support Ysqaq bab was Baba Tukty Aziz. He was so influential that he convinced two hundred thousand local people to join Islam in one day.

8- Khorasan Ata was Ahmad Yasawi's great grandfather's brother as stated before, he came to Middle Asia with lots of soldiers to spread Islam. And finally when he came to Qyzylqum, he built here mosque and school so that local people could join Islam. Khorasan Ata's mausoleum was the place where Ahmad Yasawi used to pilgrimage during his life time.

9- Beket Ata was not Khwaja Ahmad's student but he continued his deeds. Beket Ata's father told him to visit Shopan Ata's resting place in order to ask Shopan Ata to bless him to study Islam and Turkish Islam which was founded by Ahmad Yasawi.

10- Shopan Ata was one of the students of Ahmad Yasawi (Qorganbekov, 2011, 118).

11- Shaqpaq Ata was Shopan Ata's grandson and Ahmad Yasawi's follower.

12- Sultan Upi was Suleymen Baqirgani's son and one of the followers of Khwaja Ahmad.

13- Zangi Ata was Khwaja Ahmad's follower and Suleymen Baqirgani's student.

14- Qoshqar Ata was Khwaja Ahmad's follower.

15- Haji Bektash Veli was Khwaja Ahmad's students' student and his follower. His teacher was Lukman Perende who is known as one of the Khwaja Ahmad's best students (Taşğın, 2009, 52-53).

16- Aisha Bibi is Suleymen Baqirgani's daughter. Also her mother was Qarabura's daughter.

The geographic location of all resting places of all above mentioned people may serve as evidence that Khwaja Ahmad is the main historical person who started spreading Islam among Turkish people.

The third group of Khwaja Ahmad's toponymic heritage is closely related to Khwaja Ahmad's relatives, his students and followers. The place names that belong to the last group of Ahmad Yasawi's toponymic heritage are formed from the place names which appeared under the influence of Ahmad Yasawi's relatives, students and followers and from the place names which people named after them. They are as above analyzed, Tulkibasi and the name of the city Osh in Kyrgyzstan, the settlement in Uzbekistan which is named after Zangiata, the city Qoshqar Ata in the Kyrgyz Republic, the town Hacıbektaş in Turkey, the village named after Qoshqar Ata in Tajikistan, and the river Qoshqar Ata in Kazakhstan.

One of the place names that appeared under the influence of Ahmad Yasawi's relatives, students and followers is thought to be the name of the place where Suleyman Baqirgani served and spread Islam, the settlement of Baqirgan. Also this place is very covert because nowadays nobody knows where Baqirgan was. It is commonly believed that the place was fleed.

According to the legends, the great mentor and founder of Turkish Islamic sufi school Khwaja Ahmad, used to give orders to his chosen and gifted students to spread Islam in the Turkish path in particular places. For example, he blessed Shopan Ata to spread the seeds of his study in Mangystau which is in the Western part of Kazakhstan (Shadkam-Sultanbek, 2022, 3), Khadzhi Bektash Vali to spread Turkish Islam in Minor Asia (Taşğın, 2017, 64-66). And once he invited Suleyman whom he named Khakim Ata and told him that the next day he will see a camel in front of the door of his house. Then Khwaja Ahmad told Hakim Ata to ride that camel and not to stop until the camel will be exhausted and will stop itself. And then Ahmad Yasawi ordered him to spread Islam near the place where the camel will stop. So Baqirgani built a settlement near the particular place where camel stopped, couldn't get up and screamed. 'To scream' in Kazakh means 'Baqyru', 'Baqyrgan' is 'screamed'. So the place where Suleyman stopped and started to reside and spread Yasawi's ideas was named 'Baqirgan' and Khakim Ata became Suleyman Baqirgani, even when he was from Yassi (Qorganbekov, 2011, 103).

Explanation suggesting that some scholars assume Zangi Ata was the person who influenced the process of appearance of the place name Osh on the map of the Kyrgyz Republic is given.

Conclusion

This paper discovers that Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi was the name-giver of some place names. And that he had left huge toponymic heritage after himself, which in this paper are proposed to be divided into three main groups. They are as above mentioned, 1. The place names name-giver of which was Ahmad Yasawi himself; 2. Ahmad Yasawi's, his relatives', students' and followers' tombs, mosques and mausoleums; 3. The place names which appeared under the influence of Ahmad Yasawi's relatives, students and followers. Summing up Khwaja Ahmad's toponymic heritage in numbers it was found that Khwaja Ahmad's toponymic heritage in total includes 13 econyms, 2 hydronyms, one oronym and 17 nekronyms. It also reveals Khwaja Ahmad's role as a historical person in the process of spreading Islam among Turkish people. There are given suggestions about the etymology of some places which can be accepted not just as the toponymic heritage of Ahmad Yasawi, but also as the place name which belongs to the Turkish toponymic spaces of the Turkestan Region.

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