

38. Some Notes on Central Asian Turkic Place Names

By

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Very little has been written and published about the place names of the Turkic-speaking areas of Central Asia. The most comprehensive study was undertaken by A. VON LE COQ (1922, pp. 89–123). Later on G. RAQUETTE (1928, pp. 146–157) published an article in Swedish on the subject. To my knowledge no further studies of the place names of this area have ever been made, although references to and explanations of particular names are to be found in different works of a geographical, ethnological or linguistic character dealing with the area. I would like to mention in this connection P. PELLIOT, (1959) whose work is of immense importance for not only the history of Central Asia in general but also for the historical study of its place names, although mainly for the names of the more ancient, non-Turkic periods.

All those who have had the favour of working with SVEN HEDIN know that he had intended publishing a comprehensive list of all the geographical names which were to appear in the series of publications on his last expedition to Central Asia (cf. HAACK 1941, p. 6, and HEDIN 1942, p. 318). I myself had undertaken to standardize the Turkic names and Dr. UNKRIG the Mongolian, Chinese, and Tibetan names, later on in collaboration with K. GRØNBECH. My part in this undertaking was, however, limited to the names of the first leaf of the Central Asia Atlas, through circumstances which I could not foresee when the work on the nomenclature of maps was planned—long before the Second World War. As HAACK rightly says (l.c.) the task of normalizing the place names was, and is, an almost insoluble operation, primarily because of the immense geographical area covered and because of the many dialects and languages spoken there, which are to this day very inadequately known and studied.

I am very happy to have been invited to pay my respects to my old friend ERIK NORIN by setting down on paper a few remarks—I would prefer to call them stray notes, or reflections—on the geographical names of Central Asia. My remarks will deal with both the methodological aspect and with the linguistic aspect. In the latter case I have chosen a specific type of names: the “full sentence” place names, which I will try to analyze, at least preliminarily.

Most of the geographical names of Central Asia were originally recorded by European travellers or scientists who lacked even a rudimentary knowledge of the language or languages in question. MARCO POLO could serve as a good

example. PELLIOT's Notes (1959) may be considered as the outstanding example of all the detective work which hundreds of years later has to be undertaken in order to unveil the secrets of the geographical nomenclature of Asia of those days. Even when, later on, a European explorer had the help of a native interpreter it is not at all safe to assume that the geographical names were recorded properly. First of all there were very few, if any, interpreters to be had, who, having a thorough knowledge of the language, would like to endure the hardships of the travels in deserts and mountains. The interpreters who were willing to accompany the explorers were mostly second-rate and more of value for oral translation than for recording geographical names. STEIN, who is certainly one of the travellers who had more than a scanty knowledge of the spoken language of Chinese Central Asia, found the difficulties great and invokes caution as to the names recorded: "It has not always been possible in the independent surveys by assistants to eliminate mistakes due to imperfect hearing, inadequate training in phonetic spelling, or occasional misapprehension of a language with which they could acquire but a limited colloquial familiarity" (STEIN 1923, p. 61). It should be added that many travellers and explorers who have recorded geographical names in this area have been under the influence of the phonetics of their own language, an influence which often is perceptible in their recording of the names. Thus a Swede who has never had training in phonetics would often confuse *o* and *u* (Swedish having *å* for *o*, and *u* being pronounced like the front vowel *ü*¹) and, e.g., record *tuz* 'salt' as *toz*; a Swede from Southern Sweden would probably be influenced by the *r grasseyé* of his dialect, which is very close to the γ of Turkic dialects, and consequently write down $\gamma av\gamma a$ 'disturbance' as *ravra*. Another rather common inadvertence occurs in the case of χ , sometimes spelt *kh* and sometimes *ch*, in the latter case representing the phonetic value of \check{c} . Any scholar who intends to base a study of Central Asian place names on the existing supply of toponymical material should, if I may be allowed to give a piece of advice, ascertain the nationality of the recorder of the geographical names in question beforehand and even try to find out if he speaks or spoke some special dialect of his country. This might help to clarify some of the puzzles he will anyhow encounter. I repeat that this, of course, applies to the traveller-recorder without a previous phonetic training.

SHIPTON in one of his works (1951, p. 102) says:

The literal meaning of "Muztagh Ata" is "Ice-mountain Father". It is said that the mountain received its name in the following way. When SVEN HEDIN asked one of the Kirghiz nomads in the district what it was called, he received the polite reply: "It is called 'Muztagh', Father". I was told this by one of the former Swedish missionaries in Kashgar, who may have got it either from HEDIN himself or from a member of one

¹ For the phonetic rendering of the Turki or Turkic words or phrases occurring in this article I am following the system used by me in my "Studien zu einer osttürkischen Lautlehre" (Lund 1933) and my other publications of a later date.

of his later expeditions. I cannot vouch for the story, and I am not even sure whether it was SVEN HEDIN who was originally responsible for the adoption of the name. However, it is not an improbable explanation of the fact that no inhabitant of Sinkiang with whom I have discussed the matter has ever heard of the name Muztagh Ata. On the other hand, every ice-mountain or range of mountains that I have approached in South Sinkiang is known to the people in its vicinity as Muztagh.

In 1929 I heard the same story in Kashgar about the name Muztagh Ata. It was said by those who had lived long enough in Kashgar or Yarkand to have met HEDIN during his early travels in Chinese Central Asia that he was called *ata* 'father' by the caravan people because of his impressive manners and his generosity.

There seems to be no doubt that HEDIN was the one who gave the peak its name (1899, p. 217) or at least he appears to be the introducer of the name into geographical literature. Before that it was only one of the many *muztay* 'ice-mountain, glacier' which are to be found everywhere in the area. It probably is, to take an example, the same "precipitous peak" which SHAW (1871, p. 312) once registered under the name Moostagh. Later on (op. cit., p. 419) he mentions the great peak near Yangi Hissar which is called by him Taghalma Mooztagh, and he adds "They know plenty of local names but have no general name for any range."

Assuming that HEDIN was given the honorific title of *ata* by the caravan men or the local people in the places he passed through, it is plausible that the name would be a combination of *muztay* + *ata* meaning "Ice-mountain, father!". If this is so, we may next assume that Hedin had asked the people present when he saw for the first time "the loftiest mountain of the Pamirs, towering up to the height of 25,600 feet" (HEDIN, op. cit., p. 217) what its name was in, e.g., this way: *bu taynñiñ æti ne dur?* "What is the name of this mountain?" He then could either have got the reply *muztayata dur* 'It is Muztagh Ata', which would be the most likely way for a Turk or Kirghiz to reply, using and repeating the *dur* of the original question, or they could have replied *muztay, ata!* 'It is ice-mountain, father!', omitting the *dur*. It is evident from HEDIN's own translation "Father of the Ice Mountains" (HEDIN 1899, p. 217) that he himself never thought of his honorary title—perhaps unknown to him—of *ata* 'father' being involved. Assuming this it remains only *muztayata dur*. From the linguistic point of view *muztayata* is a questionable composition. The result of a translation of "father of the ice-mountains" into Turki would be *muztaynñiñ atası* or *muztaylærnñiñ atası*, not *muztayata*. It is, however, possible that Hedin—if we continue with this hypothetical exercise—got another reply to his question, viz. *muztay atajdur* 'they call it ice-mountain' = 'they call it Muztagh'. There is in Turki a verb *atamaq* which in these circumstances could have been used, especially in polite speech. Possibly, HEDIN, who otherwise had a good knowledge of Turki for practical purposes, may have overlooked it or even never heard it mentioned. Or he was impressed to such a

degree by the lofty sight of the Muztagh that his sense of the majestic and lyric embodied in the snow-clad peak in front of him made him devise a name which now, perhaps, will forever remain on the maps of Southern Sinkiang. Its origin will—likewise probably forever—remain slightly obscure.

I have chosen Muztagh Ata as an example of the many pitfalls there may be in Central Asian place names. As I have said before, most of the Central Asian Turki names have been recorded by people without previous phonetic or linguistic training. Many of them may have travelled alone through unmapped country in the company of a few natives and with a meager knowledge of the language consisting mainly of certain standard phrases like *bu jerniñ æti neme?* ‘What is the name of this place?’ The reply to this question from a tired caravan man towards the end of a long day may have been *daydur*. A locality then easily got the name Dangdur meaning “This is a rest-house” on the map. The caravan man had only one thing in mind: the rest-house where they had alighted and where there was fodder to be had for his horses and something to eat and drink for himself, and shelter for the night.

There are many accidental circumstances we have to take into consideration when we study the nomenclature of Central Asia. It is evident that many times names have been recorded in an unsatisfactory manner from the linguistic point of view. But there is another source of deficiencies. It certainly has happened many a time that the inhabitants of a locality intentionally have given a wrong name to a stranger, maybe in the fear that a visit from a foreigner might lead to visits from others, or from tax collectors, or that it might mean enlistment of soldiers—to take a few examples. Sometimes the inhabitants of a locality may have played practical jokes on the visitor by giving him as the name of their place *sekiz terek* ‘Eight poplars’ when in reality it was *toquz terek* ‘Nine poplars’.

What VAMBERY (1891, pp. 263–264) says of Russian Turkestan about the suspicion and the reserve of Central Asian Turks when they meet strangers, and especially Europeans, and in addition non-Moslems—suspicion and reserve which play a role in all the difficulties in obtaining the correct names of localities—certainly holds good for every part of Central Asia. It existed a long time after VAMBERY travelled in those parts of the world, and I would not exclude its existence even today in remote parts of Inner Asia and elsewhere in the world. This reluctance to part with information about place names or folklore, manners and customs, etc., is something which every field worker will have to cope with, not only in Central Asia but everywhere in the still existing primitive parts of the world.

Speaking of suspicion and unwillingness to part with information or generally to cooperate, I feel sure that many of those who have travelled or done field work in far-off areas of Central Asia for the purpose of scientific, linguistic or ethnological research have met with the question “What are you going to do with all that you learn from us?” or “Who can be interested in the name of such a small village as ours?” or “Why do you want to know the name of

that river? There is no water in it now anyhow, so it is worthless." I am convinced that there must be tales told to this day in small villages and hamlets along the caravan roads in the mountains and deserts in Central Asia about the strange behaviour and inquisitiveness of such men as NORIN, HEDIN, or AMBOLT, mixed with respect for their wisdom and intelligence. We have in the literature on Central Asia one instance which illustrates this side of the explorer's activities. H. BELLEW, the well-known traveller and physician of Afghanistan fame, relates in one of his books (1874, p. 153 et seq.) the philosophy of the Afghans as to the European travellers in their country. It is a picture of admiration for their abilities which is quite entertaining and amusing:

The Saggid (an Afghan Commissioner) ... found me (Dr. Bellew) busily penning notes, and jocularly remarked, "I know you people always write down everything you see and hear, and afterwards publish it to the world. Now pray, Doctor Sahib, what have you been writing about me?" This was an unexpectedly home question, but, following in his own merry mood, I evaded a direct reply by the remark that his observation was quite correct; that as a nation we were given to writing, and that with some of us the habit exceeded the bounds of moderation and utility, and was then called a *cacoethes scribendi*. "Very likely, very likely", interposed the Saggid, "no doubt you people write a great deal more than is of any earthly use, but the habit is not without its merits. Now you will doubtless have written down all about the country you have come through, and will know it better than its own inhabitants." I here observed that, with the most careful and leisurely inquiries, we could hardly expect to attain to such perfection. "Nay, but you do", said the Saggid, "you go riding along and come to a village. To the first man you meet in it you say, 'What's the name of this village?' He tells you, and then you say 'What do you call that hill?' and he gives you its name. Out comes your notebook, and down go the names, and by and by all the world knows that there is such a hill near such a village, a fact nobody else in the country is aware of except the inhabitants of the actual locality.

And then follows the admiration for the clever exactitude of the European traveller ending in a note on the utter uselessness of the intellectual efforts of the European explorer:

The Saggid was as much amused by this telling *argumentum ad hominem* as we were, and added, "Now, by way of illustration, I will tell you what occurred to me many years ago, when, as a young man, I went to Bangalore with a batch of horses for sale. An English officer who spoke Persian asked me one day about my country, and when I told him the name of my village, he turned it up in his map, and said, 'Yes, I see. There is a place near it called Ganda China.' 'No', said I, 'there is no such place near it, nor even in the country'. 'There must be', maintained he. Well, considering I knew my own country best, I thought it useless arguing the point, so remained silent, allowing him to have his own way. When I returned home and recounted my adventures in the Deccan, amongst others I mentioned this circumstance, with no very flattering allusion to the English officer's obstinacy. 'You are wrong, Shah Sahib' (the respectful title by which Saggids are addressed), said two or three voices. 'Ganda China is the briny bog at the further end of the hollow behind our hill'. 'Well', said I, 'I never knew that before'. So the English officer, you see, knew what I did not know of my native place."

I will not exclude that the ignorance of the Shah Sahib partly was due to the object of the conversation being such an unworthy place as a 'briny bog'.

Anyhow, I can find no better illustration of the psychological background of the recording of place names—although only one phase of it.

With this I end my remarks of the more methodological character and turn to the linguistic aspect of the names. I here keep mainly to the Turki-speaking parts of Sinkiang, or Eastern Turkestan, a name which I continue to use concurrently with its Chinese equivalent.

The place names of Eastern Turkestan can be divided into two different main groups which are easily detected by a linguist with some training in Turki and Turkic languages.

First of all we have the names which originate in the pre-Turkish period. Many of these are certainly of great antiquity and date back to the different civilisations which were in existence along the caravan roads or, to use the more historic name, “the Silk roads”. Place names of this type are, e.g., Kashgar, Khotan (the different interpretations of which are to be found in PELLIOU 1959), Guma, Bora or Mokuila. Sometimes they may appear to be of Turkic origin. Thus it is tempting to derive the first syllable of Kashgar from Turkic *qaš* ‘nephrite’. It is, however, unlikely. In this group we have to put all the place names which cannot be explained with the help of our present knowledge of the Turkic languages of Central Asia, living or extinct. As I have said above, some of the names belonging to this group may appear to be of Turkic origin; so special care has to be taken when grouping them. As a general observation it can be said that very little has been done to this day in interpreting these names. I can only refer once more to PELLIOU’s “Notes on Marco Polo”, which is the best book of reference we possess.

The second large group consists of those names which are clearly of Turkish origin like Qizil ‘Red’, Qizil-su ‘Red river’, Aq-su ‘White river’, Topa-dawan ‘The dusty pass’, Toghraq ‘The poplar’, Ördelik ‘Duck-place’ etc. etc. Within this group we have furthermore a very common type of names constructed with *ba:za:r* ~ *baza:r* ‘bazaar’, *a:ba:d* ~ *aba:d* ~ *abat* ~ *awat* ‘cultivation, inhabited place’ or *hissa:r* ‘fortress’, to give a few typical examples. Thus Charshamba-bazar ‘Wednesday market’, Faizabad ‘Abundant cultivation’ and Yangi Hissar ‘New fortress’.

It is very difficult and will remain very difficult to establish the antiquity of these purely Turki names. It will be possible in some cases with the help of existing historical sources to establish for how long a certain name has been in use or at least to establish that it was already in use during such and such an epoch. But the majority of the names will leave us in uncertainty. We may, however, assume that names of the first category (Qizil, etc.) may represent older strata than names of the latter type (Charshamba-bazar). New place names will, of course, always appear, everywhere in the world. In Turkestan names, e.g., on *-a:ba:d* belong to the most frequent innovations. They are made when somebody begins the cultivation of a new place in the desert with the help of irrigation. The cultivator’s name may be Hassan; the name of the

place will be Hassanabad. These names come and go. Hassan may get into financial difficulties; his cultivation will be neglected and finally disappear. With it disappears its name, the place to be revived years afterwards and perhaps under a new name.

We have another type of Eastern Turkestan geographical names which in all probability also belong to the same category as the names on *-ba:za:r*, *-a:ba:d* etc., i.e., what I would like to call living geographical names. These are the names of the "full sentence" type, e.g. Qulan-öldi 'The wild ass died (here)', Ambal-chüşhkan 'The Amban fell (from his horse here)', which are rather abundant within Eastern Turkestan.

By a "full sentence" geographical name I mean that the name must be constructed as a full sentence with subject and predicate, or that the verbal form used includes also the subject, or a sentence with accusative object. As far as I have been able to establish with the help of the names occurring in the existing maps of Eastern Turkistan, I arrive at the following preliminary classification:¹

A. Sentence consisting of nomen in subject form + intransitive verb in perfect.

Examples. At-öldi 'the horse died'; At-qachtı (*at qačtı*) 'the horse fled'; Baliq-öldi (*baliq öldi*) 'the fish died'; Bala-qoidi (*bela: qojdı*) 'accident struck'; Beshik-qaldi (*beşik qaldı*) 'the cradle remained behind'; Chapan-qaldi (*čapan qaldı*) 'the coat remained behind'; Dolan-yatti (*dola:n jattı*) 'the Dolan slept (here)'; Yuk-qaldi (*jük qaldı*) 'the loads remained'; Qalandar-öldi (*qælender öldi*) 'the mendicant died'; Palta-tüshti (*palta tüşti*) 'the axe fell down'; Qalmaq-tüshti (*qalmaq tüşti*) 'The Kalmuck (or the *qalmaq*-horse) fell into the water'; Qochqar-olturdi (*qoçqar-olturdi*) 'the ram sat down'; Qulan-öldi 'the wild ass (or the foal) died'.

Note. In some cases the subject is modified by an adjective attribute: Khitai-khatkeldi (*çıtaj çæt keldi*) 'the Chinese letter (or the letter from China, or from the Chinaman) arrived'; Sarigh-buqa-öldi (*særıy buqa öldi*) 'the yellow bull died'.

B. Sentence consisting of nomen in accusative object form + transitive verb in perfect.

Examples. Arghamchi-baghladi (*aryamçı bayladı*) 'he (they) tied a rope'; At-qoidi (*at qojdı*) 'he put a horse (there)'; At-qoshti (*at qoštı*) 'he added a horse'; Iga-asti (*iger astı*) 'he hung up a saddle'; Baba-qoidi (*baba qojdı*) 'he left the grandfather'; Chapan-qoidi (*čapan qojdı*) 'he put down the coat'; Igar-saldi (*iger saldı*) 'he saddled (the horse)'; Qar-yaghdi (*qar jaydı*) 'it snowed'.

¹ Abbreviations: HCA = HEDIN, Central Asia; HST = HEDIN, Southern Tibet; S = STEIN, Innermost Asia. Names quoted without indication of source are frequent in the maps. They have been selected from the point of view of their being correctly recorded from the phonetic and lexical view. When the transcription of the name is the same as the phonetic rendering, the latter is not given.

C. Sentence consisting of nomen in subject form + intransitive verb in preterite participle.

Examples. Ambal-chüshkan (*ambal čüshken ~ tüshken*) ‘the Amban (Chinese official) fell (from the horse or in the water)’ or ‘the Amban passed the night’; Kalla-ölğan (*kalla ölgen*) ‘the cattle died’; Qum-chapghan (*qum čapghan*) ‘the sand galloped’, viz. drifted; Tungan-tüşkan (*tungan tüshken*) ‘the Tungan fell down (or put up for the night)’; Niaz-hakim-bek-tüşkan (*nijaz ha:kim bek tüshken*) ‘Niaz Hakim Bek fell down (or put up for the night)’.

Note. The subject may be modified by an adjective attribute: Aq-jüja-ölğan (*aq dzüdže ölgen*) ‘the white chick died’.

D. Sentences consisting of nomen in accusative object form + transitive verb in preterite participle.

Examples. Kiyik-tutghan (*kijik tutghan*) ‘they caught an antelope’; Möle-qoighan (*möle qojghan*) ‘they put the pack-saddle (there)’; Qapaq-asqan ‘they hung a bottle-gourd (in a tree, e.g.)’; Quyruq-asqan (*qujruq asqan*) ‘they hung a (cow’s, e.g.) tail (in a tree, e.g.)’.

Note. The sentence might be widened by a nomen in the form of subject + nomen as accusative object: Ibrahim-chai-ichkan (*ibra:him čaj ichken*) ‘Ibrahim had tea (there)’.

E. Sentence consisting of a verb in preterite participle.

Examples. Soqushghan (*soqušghan*) ‘(where once upon a time) they battled’; Airilghan (*ajrilyan*) ‘(where) it was divided’—said of a river which is branching off into two arms (HEDIN 1902, p. 9); the same name in a contracted form Arghan (HEDIN 1902, p. 23). Another name of this type quoted by RAQUETTE (1928, p. 154) is Yighin (*jÿin*) ‘where they gathered’.

F. Sentence consisting of nomen in accusative object form + a verb in aorist I.

Example. Oq-salur ‘they load (their rifles)’ (RAQUETTE, l.c.).

G. Sentence consisting of nomen in subject form + verb in aorist I, the negative form.

Examples. Kün Tegmaz, Kün Tigmaz (*kün tegmes*) ‘Sunlight does not reach (there)’ (S No. 9D4, HST 1D6, STEIN (1923) 2A3, 4D3, 9D4).

H. Sentence consisting of aorist I in the negative form.

Examples. Yetmes (*jetmes*) ‘(it) is not (to be) reached’ (S No. 21D1; HST 2B10); Yetalmas (*jetalmes*) ‘(it) can’t be reached’ (S No. 7D2 Yetalmaz)—both names represent villages.

I. Sentence consisting of a nomen in accusative object form + transitive verb in the imperative, 2nd person, negative form.

Example. Ishak-tartma (*išek tartma*) ‘Don’t drag a donkey (there)!’ (S No. 2D3).

J. Sentence consisting of an intransitive verb in the imperative, 2nd person, negative form.

Example. Ketme (*Ketme*) ‘Don’t go there!’ (S No. 22C4, HST 5D7)—a desert tract.

K. Sentence consisting of nomen + *ba:r*.

Example. Yaghach-vār (S No. 12A1) (*jaγač ba:r*) ‘there is timber (wood) to be had’.

L. Sentence with *ba:r* omitted.

Example. Khāmān-tola (S No. 7D4) (*χæma:n tola*) ‘there are many threshing places’.

In addition to these geographical names of the “full sentence” type we have a combination of “full sentence” + a nomen whereby the product becomes a nomen modified by an attribute. These names are also rather frequent. I have noticed the following categories, but I would like to emphasize once more that the notes presented here are only preliminary notes; a more penetrating study might reveal further combinations.

BB.¹ Nomen in the accusative object form + transitive verb in perfect + nomen.

Examples. Charkh-asti-köl (*čarχ asti köl*) “the pond (where) ‘they hung a wheel’” (HST 2C5); Chirak-saldi-davan (*čera:γ saldi dava:n*) “the mountain pass (where) ‘they put a lamp’” (HST 7A3); Kapak-aste-mazār (*qapaq asti maza:r*) “the shrine (where) ‘they hung a bottle gourd’” (S No. 14B3); Tonguz-atti-köl (*toγuz attı köl*) “the swamp (lagoon) (where) ‘they shot a boar’” (HST 2D6, HCA9); Igar-āldi-dawān (*iger aldi dava:n*) “the mountain-pass (where) ‘they took the saddle’” (S No. 2C2).

Only in one case, which does not exclude that others will be found, have I noted a place name of this type with the nomen governing the “full sentence” name placed first, viz. Ötäng-chapan-qaldi (*öteγ çapan qaldı*) “the rest-house (where) ‘the coat remained’”.

CC. Nomen in the subject form + intransitive verb in preterite participle + nomen.

Examples. Āt-ölgan-dawān (*at ölgen dava:n*) “the mountain pass (where) ‘the horse died’” (S No. 28B4); Qalmaq-ölgan-bulaq (*qalmaq ölgen bulaq*) “the spring (where) ‘the Kalmuck (or the *qalmaq*-horse) died’”.

DD. Nomen in the accusative object form + transitive verb in preterite participle + nomen.

¹ The double capitals refer to the division of the full sentence names used earlier in this paper (single capitals).

Examples. Yolbars-atqan-köl “the pond (swamp etc.) (where) ‘they shot the tiger’” (S No. 30A2 Yolbāz-atkan-köl).

In STEIN’S (S No. 30C1) Tokhta-ākhūn-ku-atkan-köl (*toxta a:χun qu: atqan köl*) “the swamp (where) ‘Tokhta Akhun shot a swan’” we have an example of an even wider sentence structure; in STEIN’S (S No. 19D1) Kara-öçke-ölturgan-kichik (*qara öçke öltürgen kiçik*) “the ford (where) ‘a black goat was killed’” a sentence with the accusative + an adjective attribute. These two examples will be sufficient to show what a complicated—and elegant—structure a geographical name can assume.

I am not going to draw definite conclusions about the distribution of these place names or about their origin, but I feel that on the basis of the material here presented and a study of the maps existing one can say that they belong mainly to the mountains, deserts and countryside, not to the towns or the surroundings of towns or townships. A quick look at the word-material used in these place names would reveal the following:

A. The most frequent verb occurring in these names seems to be *öl-* ‘to die’ followed by others of an equally ‘dramatic’ sense: *tüš-* ‘to fall’, *soquš-* ‘to fight’, *čap-* to gallop, *öltur-* ‘to kill’. Another category is related to hunting: *at-* ‘to shoot, to kill’, *öltur-* ‘to kill’; but the most extensive group—although *öl-* is the leading verb from the aspect of ‘intensity’—consists of verbs which are connected with the daily life of caravan people, labourers and farmers: *tüš-* ‘to put up for the night’, *bayla-* ‘to bind, to tie’, *čap-* ‘to gallop’, *tut-* ‘to take, to grasp’, *qoj-* ‘to put, to put down, to leave, to strike’, *tart-* ‘to drag’, *ket-* ‘to go’, *kel-* ‘to come’, *qač-* ‘to flee’, *qal-* ‘to remain’, *sal-* ‘to put, to put on’, *as-* ‘to hang, to hang up’, *qoš-* ‘to add’, *teg-* ‘to reach’, *jet-* to reach, to arrive’, *oltur-* ‘to sit’, *jat-* ‘to lie down’, *ič-* ‘to drink’, *jay-* ‘to snow, to rain’.

B. As to nomina a comprehensive group consists of names of household tools or implements: *palta* ‘axe’, *aryamči* ‘rope’, *iger* ‘saddle’, *möle* ‘pack-saddle’, *čarχ* ‘wheel, spinning-wheel’, *čera:γ* ‘lamp’, *qapaq* ‘bottle-gourd’, *beşik* ‘cradle’, or personal belongings: *čapan* ‘coat’. Another category will comprise animals, either domestic or wild (in connection with hunting): *at* ‘horse’ (most frequent of all the words within this group), *buqa* ‘bull’, *išek* ‘donkey’, *qočqar* ‘ram’, *kalla* ‘cattle’, *öçke* ‘goat’, *džüdže* ‘chick’, *qulan* ‘wild ass’, *kijik* ‘antelope’, *toyuz* ‘wild boar’, *jolbars* ‘tiger’, *baliq* ‘fish’. A definite group of nomina is related to caravan life or, at least, to open door life: *jük* ‘load’, *dava:n* ‘mountain-pass’, *kiçik* ‘ford’, *qum* ‘sand’, *bulaq* ‘spring’, *öteγ* ‘inn, rest-house’, *qar* ‘snow’, *čaj* ‘tea’. In only one case have I noted an abstract noun, viz. *bela:* ‘disaster’ which fits well in with the verb *öl-* ‘to die’, the most frequent verbal form, if one wants to stress the ‘dramatic’ trend. This trend seems to have been of importance in the genesis of many of these place names. I would, of course, have to modify the word ‘dramatic’ by saying that this does not imply what we modern people

consider 'trying to the nerves'. The tragedy embodied in a place name like Chapan-qaldi 'the coat remained behind' can only be experienced by a caravan man who suddenly encounters freezing temperature and has forgotten his coat in a rest-house a day's journey behind. For him, and his companions, the place may be of no other significance; it may be just a mud-house but for the loss of the coat. The story of it is repeated to others whom they might meet in the road or in a rest-house and a new place name is thus created.

But it is quite evident that not all of these names originate this way. Many of them evidently are just landmarks in a sparsely inhabited area. Take, e.g. Igar-asti 'somebody hung a saddle in a tree'. The act of hanging a saddle in a tree would be of no importance in a village or a densely populated tract. But in a desert or along a road without habitations it is something worth remembering. The name is thus passed on and becomes a real place name for those who travel the same way frequently. We have to accept that many of these names are short-lived, or are changed, forgotten by some, revived by others. We even have to take into consideration that some of them may have been invented for the convenience of the caravan man accompanying the explorers or travellers, who painstakingly wrote them down for their maps or in their diaries. For the Turk who gave the name to the lonely inn with a dying poplar next to it, it was just a method for remembering a place where he might return later on. Or perhaps he wanted to please the European Sahib who evidently was so eager to record the names of every ford or minor mountainpass which they encountered.

Historically, the Turk peoples have always been peoples on the move, either as nomads or as warriors and conquerors. My assumption is that they must have created during their migrations many names of the "full sentence" type everywhere in Asia. This leads me to deal briefly with two problems: the dissemination of the geographical names of this type in other areas of Asia and the possibilities of establishing the antiquity of these names.

In both cases only very preliminary and uncertain hints can be given.

VAMBERY (1891, p. 264 et seq.) registers names like Adam-kyrylgan, Baba-Durmaz, Barsa-Kilmez, Sandyk-katschan and Topjatan which seem to indicate names of the "full sentence" type. By chance I happen to notice a place name like Su gelen Dere 'the valley (where) water is flowing' in Azerbaijan (KHAIIDAKOV 1960, p. 465). Names like these indicate that the "full sentence" type of name occurs also in other parts of the Turkic-speaking world.

As to the antiquity of the names, I have been able—after a not too careful scrutiny, I admit—to find only two names from an earlier period, viz. in the Babur namah (BEVERIDGE, 1922, p. 253, n. 3) āi-tūghdī 'the moon rose' and perhaps Babur yilān-aūtī (op. cit., p. 147) (or yilān aūt) < *yilan ötti* 'a snake passed', both from 1502 A.D. Furthermore I note from the Sanglax (CLAUSON 1960, p. 109) Ay toldi 'the moon became full'; on the other hand, the Sanglax

also registers *Ilan oti* (l.c.) 'snake-fire'; I suppose it must be the same name as the *Yilān-aūti* of Babur, the *Sanglax* being a late compilation, based upon literary Chaghatai material. I do not have much hope for many of these names coming to light in the literary sources which are now available or will be made available. The compilers or authors probably considered names of this type too unimportant to record.

I will end these remarks with a question which can be answered only by those who have the opportunity of travelling in these parts of Asia today. Assuming that the "full sentence" geographical names are living names, my question is this: have the inhabitants of these areas adapted themselves to our new technical age and invented new names, constructed the same way as, e.g., *Qulan-öldi* 'The wild ass died'? In that case one ought to find new names along the motorized highways of Sinkiang, such as 'The lorry broke down' or 'He forgot to fill the tank'. Or has the comfortable or, at least, the relatively comfortable way of travelling and the easier mode of living put an end to the formation of place names of the "full sentence" type among the Turks of the high plains and mountains of Central Asia?

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