

## Lexical-Semantic Analysis of the Ancient Turkic Place Names

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**Abstract:** During the integration process of Turkic countries and formation of institutions and organizations which focus on the problem of researching languages, history and culture of Turkic people, toponymists and onomasticians face a difficult task related to solving various problems of history and theory of Turkic languages. The problem is that the majority of results of the study insufficiently reveal the essence and specificity of worldview of the ancient Turkic people. The purpose of this study is to present new data on the ancient Turkic history, social-political system, inhabited territory and even mentality through semantic analyses of place names of the ancient Turkic period. The linguistic and general scientific methods we applied gave us to systematize and define semantic classes of the ancient place names. On the basis of classification method the general principals of place names' formation in the ancient period are determined. The result of given analyses is in discovering nomination principals of the ancient place names, the origin of these names and their functioning features, which are connected with psychological and social-economical as well as the historical factors. The sources of the given research are Orkhon-Yenisey written monuments, historical, linguistic, ethnographic, geographic works and scientific literature on toponymy.

**Key words:** Onomastics • Toponyms • Hydronyms • Orkhon inscriptions • Ethnotoponyms  
• Antropotoponyms

### INTRODUCTION

Recently many scholars have addressed to different aspects of ancient written monuments because they have a many-sided historical, linguistic, geographical materials of ancient times. The Old Turkic Orkhon monuments are not an exception. These monuments are dated back to the 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries; they are situated on the banks of the Selenga and Orkhon rivers in Mongolia. The first to decipher these monuments was outstanding Danish scholar V. Thomson. He opened a new era in Turkic studies. After V. Thomson, runic inscriptions were read and translated by Hungarian, Turkish, German, Finnish and Soviet scholars. One can write a lot about cultural, historical, ethnographic and linguistic importance of these monuments, because these ancient texts narrate on the history and life of the Second Turkic Khanate – the Great State of ancient Turks. But they are not only a written evidence of the history and the language of ancient Turkic tribes; they are also rich invaluable information on Onomastics.

Toponymy as a branch of Onomastics is a complex discipline that basically involves three key aspects: history, geography and language. These frequently intermingle and give a picture that may be full enough for use to be able to satisfactory interpret a geographical name [1]. All geographical names have a long history of their formation; they are closely related to social life, traditions and world view of the inhabitants of respective locations. Since ancient times people have given names to geographical objects. In the process of nomination they often used appellatives, reflecting physical and geographical peculiarities of landscapes, the names of ethnic groups and nations, social and class titles of people who inhabit these places. For better understanding the nomination processes of geographical names it might be necessary to know typical situations, in which the named locations are used. A father of critical cartography J.B. Harley, who was sure that a map should be understood as more than just a set of directions, wrote “Naming a place is a widely documented act of political possession in settlement history” [2]. This statement proves that all names on the earth are linked with

historical events and have backgrounds and reasons. In this article we made an attempt to understand the reasons of place names' nominations, which is closely related to the mentality of the ancient Turks.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the given analyses in capacity of materials we used Orkhon-Yenisey written monuments from which we found the ancient Turkic place names. We applied various linguistic and general scientific methods and techniques: comparative method identified various meanings of lexis in all Turkic languages; descriptive as well as method of component analysis made it possible to collect, catalogue, typologize and order data. Classification as one of the methods in studying geographical names serves one purpose: to systematize data. The problems of classification of Turkic place names are considered by many scholars (Musaev [3], Superanskaja [4], Molčanova [5], Nikonov [6], Maxpirov [7],). However, the place names of the Orkhon written monuments are still not sufficiently studied. The purpose of classification of place names of the ancient Turkic period is to reveal main lexical-semantic groups of their appellatives and disclose the principal features of the ancient Turkic toponymic system. This purpose can be achieved by doing the following:

- Collect all the ancient Turkic place names encountered in the texts of the Orkhon written monuments;
- Identify the appellatives of these toponyms and their main lexical-semantic groups;
- Analyze the use of these toponyms in their direct and figurative meanings;
- Determine the role of these places in history of the Turks in the ancient Turkic period.

While studying place names from the linguistic point of view, an important problem is to analyze them semantically on the basis of their language material. The semantics aspect of Old Turkic place names bears complex information. Consequently semantic analyses of place names may give: 1) correct interpretation of the etymology of a name; 2) explanation of regularity of place names' occurrence; 3) opportunity to study ancient and archaic words, rarely met or not used at all, saved only in toponymic vocabulary; 4) understanding the cultural developments and activities of Turkic people in the period of place names' creation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of the vocabulary denoting appellatives in the nominating process of a geographical object is primary. The lexical diversity of such appellatives used to form the ancient Turkic toponyms, is also huge. Having analyzed all components participating in the formation of toponyms found in Orkhon inscriptions we came to distinguish the following lexical-semantic groups: **1. Descriptive toponyms; 2. Ethnotoponyms; 3. Antropotoponyms or toponyms, including social and class titles.**

**Descriptive Toponyms:** Under the descriptive toponyms we understand the system of place names reflecting landscape properties. Descriptive toponyms are indicators of special characteristics of geographical landscape. They allow distinguishing and exploring the properties of the natural landscape such as the nature and forms of relief, the character of surrounding area and color element of landscape. Size, color and shape are common characteristics of directly descriptive names [1]. Distinguishing the places where the Old Turk settled they used color differentiations and general characteristic of landscape, usage of numerals in place names content. Lexical system of these toponyms consists of color-code, character and numeral lingua elements. That is why according to lexis contained in Orkhon we divided descriptive toponyms into following subgroups: a) **Toponyms, consisting of color-code (colorative);** b) **Toponyms, reflecting characteristics of geographical object;** c) **Toponyms, consisting of numerals (enumerative).** These subgroups allow us to deeply specify the lexis, contained in place names of Orkhon monuments.

**Toponyms, Consisting of Color-Code:** Ancient people had a complex system of color-coding the geographical places. For example, the system of geographical color coding of ancient Indian people was added with names of animals and divinities [8]. Ancient Chinese had not less complex system of color-coding the geographical objects. They used to link color with religious beliefs and symbolic signs of natural elements as fire, water, earth, iron, gold, forest and etc. [9]. American Indians saw East side of world in dark black color, south – white, west – yellow or red and north – dark blue or green [10]. The geographical color coding was universal phenomenon of ancient people. Therefore the different colors are presented in

place names structure of all peoples all over the world. The Old Turks are not exception. They also used color coding in nominating process of geographical object. This is evidenced by texts of Orkhon monuments. There is a hydronym *Yaşıl Ügüz*. We show an example from Bilge Kagan's (15) text: *eçim kagan birle ilgerü yaşıl ügüz şantıñ yazıqa tegi süledimiz*. - Together with my uncle-Kagan we went forward (e.g. the east) to war until Şantıñ field, Yaşıl river [11].

In this instance *Ügüz* denotes 'river' [12]. *Yaşıl* gives the meaning of 'green color' in all Turkic languages; 'dark green' in Khalaj language, 'bright green or green and blue' in Old Uyghur language. In figurative meaning it gives 'bright' and 'fresh' in Kirghiz language; 'unripe and damp' in Turkish and Karakalpak languages; 'duck with green head' in Altay language; 'dove colored'; 'auburn horse' in Turkish dialects [13]. All these meanings are related to one another. But the last one is separated. May be it is related to Yakut language, which gives the meaning of 'fox' or 'yellow'. *Yaşıl* derives from *ya:ş*; probably crisis of *\*yasşıl* was the Den. suffix *-sil*; properly of the color of fresh vegetation, i.e. 'green' but like *Kök* not very precise and sometimes used for 'light blue'; this lack of precision still survives. In Turkish *yepil* is 'green', but green grass is *Kök ot* [12]. As we see generating basis of *Yaşıl* is *Yaş*. And it is also gives several semantic meanings: a) 'damp'; b) 'wet, watery'; c) 'teardrop'; d) 'green'; e) 'fresh'; f) 'young'; g) 'age', 'year'; h) 'wood layers' [13]. According to A. Vambéry there is semantic link between 'young', 'green' and 'wet'. Radloff, trying to show derivation of 'age, year' meanings from 'fresh, green, radiant, wet' meanings, made an explanation: 'each year (age) is the time of annually returning humidity' – it means that these meanings are very closer to each other. G. Clausson and H. Derfer imagined the semantic evolution of *Yaş* in this way: 'fresh –green'; 'wet-wet excretion-tears'; 'each year-per age of one's life' [13]. The primary form of *Yaşıl* was *Yaşsil* > *Yaşşıl* (*Yaş*+ *-sil*>*-şil* suffixes which weaken the feature of the object) [14]. The most common seme of the lexeme *Yaş* is 'green'. And all other semantic meanings were arisen from "green". We have two variants of own interpretation: 1) If we take into consideration the third meaning of *Yaş*, 'teardrop' and G. Clauson and H. Derfer's semantic evolution 'wet-wet excretion-tears' in this case 'tears' stands for 'a lot of tears-water-river, lake', on the basis of this it may be regarded that the semantic interpretation of lexeme *Yaşıl* indicated 'watery river'. 2) According to aforesaid Bang's hypothesis on suffix *-sil*>*-şil*, *Yaşıl*

means 'light green'. We suppose that *Yaşıl* has semantic evolution: 'light green-dark yellow-yellow'. That is why in historical sources *Yaşıl Ügüz* is identified as 'Yellow River'. Today *Yaşıl Ügüz* is well-known as Yellow River situated on the north side of China. It is known also as Huanghe River. In Chinese *Huanghe* means *Huan* 'yellow' and *ghe* 'River'. It might be loan translation of *Yaşıl Ügüz*. Gumilev wrote that *Yaşıl Ügüz* and *Huanghe* are the same rivers. He noted that the river had yellow color [15]. Through the semantic evolution we made an attempt to explain the link between Turkic *Yaşıl* and Chinese *Huan* colors and prove the fact that in Old Turkic people representation *Yaşıl* semantically was rich and various, determined not only 'green' color but also 'yellow' too. If we look at *Yaşıl* only as a color element, in this case semantic meaning of *Yaşıl Ügüz* place name is only limited on "yellow" color, there is no figurative meaning. But interesting fact is that the 'yellow color' mostly was saved in the form of *Sarıγ*>*Sarı* in the language system of Modern Turkic people. However, *Sarıγ* in Turkic toponymic structure and in Turkic representation in general does not mean only color element but the 'hugeness, wideness' too. In '*Sarı dala*' it gives the meaning of 'huge steppe', *Sarı jol* means 'big road' in Kazakh language [16].

The color *Qara* is presented in the structure of place names of the ancient Turkic period. *Qara Köl* and *Qara Kum* were found in the texts of Kultegin and Tonukuk monuments: *az budun yaγı boltı qara qölte sünüsdümüz költegin bir kirk yaşair erti alp salçı aqın binip oplaiu tegdi* – Az people became enemy. We fought in Karakol. Kultegin was thirty one years old. He attacked being on the white horse, Alp Shalchy (KT 2-3). *çugay quzin qara qumuγ olurur ertimiz* – We had chosen places of Kuz Chugai and Kara Kum (T 7) [11].

*Kum* gives the meaning of 'soil' [12]. In the content of place names *Qara* is usually used as the first element of denoting toponyms as well as antroponyms and ethnonyms. But the semantic meaning of seme *Qara* may be regarded primarily in a physical sense as 'black' (about color), but with a great many metaphoric meanings 'dark, devoid of light, benighted'; 'ill-fated, ill-starred, miserable' in Chuvash; 'bad, scary, terrible, nasty, ugly, bleak, tragic, dismal' in Turkish and Kumyk; 'usual, simple'; 'mass, crowd' in Kazakh; 'great, powerful, severe' used in rulers proper names of Karakhanid dynasty and in Gagauz [17]. There are set phrases in which it means: 1) 'large, massive, plenty', e.g. *Qara mal* in Kazakh, Karakalpak, Noghay and Uyghur languages means

‘cattle’; 2) ‘chief, great, powerful’, *Qara khan* means ‘great arch-founder of Karakhanid dynasty’ or *Qara aygir* means ‘mighty stallion’, *Qara bodun* ‘the ordinary people’ (as opposed to aristocracy). For example, the name of famous sea known to the Greeks as Pontos *Qara teniz* known as Black Sea had aroused considerable interest. The ancient Pontos in loan translation became known among the Turks as ‘Black Sea’. Pontos gives the meaning of ‘Inhospitable Sea’ in Greek language. In Turks representation ‘inhospitable’ denotes ‘bad, scary, terrible’. In European sources of XIII centuries Black Sea was called as ‘Great Sea’ (*Mar Mazor* in Latin). *Qara* also gives the meaning of ‘great, powerful’. So it can be connected with all these meanings; 3) ‘strong’ (about wind, frost), *Qara kib* in Turkish  $\geq$  *Gara gysh* in Azerbaijan denotes ‘the most frozen time of winter’, *Qara suik* in Nogai language ‘the strongest frost’; 4) ‘clear, pure’ (without any admixture), *Qara su* in Kazakh language ‘pure water’ or ‘only water’; 5) ‘dry land, earth’, *Qara kuvvetleri* ‘ground forces’, *Qara kurbaða* ‘ground tortoise’ in Turkish; 6) ‘the darken part of horizon, North’. Old Turks also as other peoples widely used color coding in indicating the cardinal points. One of the important evidence proving the ‘black color’ denoted North part of horizon in Turkic world-picture was Desht-Qipchak. It was divided into White and Black Kumania in XII centuries. Black Kumania was on the north side of horizon. The center of Black Kumania was North Donesk. Bulgarians, lived close to Az, were called as Black Bulgarians. The name of their state was Black Bulgaria, situated on the north side. The name was given because of the geographical position [18]; 8) ‘eagle’, *Kara quþ* (probably specifically ‘golden eagle’) or ‘the star Jupiter’ (it is the one rises at down and is called *Kara Kuþ yulduz*) in Turkish; 9) ‘slave’, *Kara baþ* (both male and female) [12]. Taking into consideration all meanings of lexeme *Qara* we can clearly say that *Qara kum* has two meanings: 1) ‘dry land, earth’ in which it denotes the type of fixed sand; 2) ‘the darken part of horizon, north’ which might also be interpreted as the northern horde of Qarakhan. Gabain suppose that seme *Qara* in *Qara kum* ‘Black-Nothorn desert’ is related to its territorial situation on the northern part of Khorasan. Supporting Gabain’s point of view and plusing two meanings we suppose that *Qara kum* denotes ‘nothorn sandy desert’. Zsegledi, who devoted much attention to the location of *Qara kum*, came to conclusion: ‘*Qara kum* is the name of sandy desert, situated on the northern frontier of China. Exactly it is on the nothorn slope of Insan close to Huanghe river

and Gobi desert [19]. *Qara* in the *Qara Køl* place name is considered by us as the ‘clear, pure (without any admixture) lake’. *Køl* gives the meaning of ‘lake’ [20]. In Kultegin inscription *Qara Køl* is mentioned one time and it was the place where they fought with Az people in 715. There are some assumptions about its location: 1) *Qara Køl* was situated near the Kemchik river, Aksu and Alash flowed into this lake. It might also be situated near Kögman (Sayan mountains, Khakassia, Russian Federation) [21]; 2) *Qara Køl* is situated in Tuva (Russian Federation). There are five rivers with the name *Qara Køl*. Hence it is river system, five rivers flows into this system [22].

The color *Aq* is also mentioned in the structure of place name *Aq Termel* in the text of Tonukuk (25) monument: *sü jorüdim atlat tedim aq termel keçe ugru kalüdim* - I odered army to move; I said: ride a horses! Passing *Aq Termel* I odered to stop for a camp [11].

There are two different *Aq*. 1) *A:q* (with long double sound ‘a’) in all sources gives the direct meaning of ‘white color’. In figurative meaning gives ‘pure’ and ‘wonderful, outstanding, amazing’. We see the semantic evolution of *Aq* in this way: 1) ‘white→pure→ wonderful’. It also gives the meaning of ‘seine’ in Turkish; ‘lattice’ in Karakalpak and Kumyk languages; ‘rete’; ‘hunting’ in Kazakh and Karakalpak languages. 2) *Aq* (with one sound ‘a’) means ‘stream, flow, flow out’ in all Turkic languages; ‘flow, stream, pour in, rain’ in Tatar and Uzbek languages; ‘aqua, liquid, wet, teardrop’ [23]. *A:k* ‘white’ originally as the color of animals’ coat is opposed to the more general word *ürüñ*, later ‘white’ in all senses [12]. It occurs often with a metaphoric meaning in numerous phrases of which, e.g. the word *Aq* in the meaning of ‘flow’ became a part of geographical nomenclature. *Aq kum* gives the meaning of ‘sand dunes, quick sands’, *Aq su* ‘rivers, fed by mountains snow’ or ‘quick rivers’. In *Aq dala* it implies ‘sand dune massive’ and ‘steppe with flowing, shifting sands’. Taking into consideration geographic symbolism of Old Turks *Aq* in color sense also gives the meaning of ‘the west side of horizon’. *Aq deniz* ‘West Sea’ is one of the names of Caspian Sea. Apparently Russian kings (tsars) were called ‘White Tsars’ [18] (i.e. ‘West Tsars’) by Turks. *Aq süjek* (white bone) in Kazakh language possibly saved from that period, which implies ‘king’s (tsars) blood, the blood of dynasty’. *Aq saqal* ‘a grey bearded man’, mostly expresses respect [21]. But in *Aq Termel* we consider two variants of interpretation of the seme *Aq*: 1) the ‘white’ color, in which it denotes the ‘purenness of the water’ and 2) the ‘flow’, in which it denotes the character

of river ‘quick river’ or ‘flowing river’. So, color was an important element in characterizing place names and it has variety of figurative sense in toponymical content.

### Toponyms, Reflecting Characteristics of Geographical

**Object:** The lexis, contained in place names says about specific character of geographical object. The second subgroup of our classification considers toponyms, characterizing religious and social features of geographical object: *ηduk Baš*, *Baybaliq*; and characterizing natural resources’ feature: *Temir Qapıγ*, *Altun Yiš*.

*İduk Baš* is mentioned in text of Kulichor monument: *sekiz yegirmi yaşıma altı çuv [sogdak] (25) tapa süledim budunuy anta buz dum tav[gaç o]n totok beš tümen sü kelti iduk bašda sünüšdüm ol süy anta yoq kišdim* – When I was eighteen year old I went to war with Sogdak’s six tribes. I made them to subordinate. On Tutuk Tabgaç came with fifty thousand army. I fought on the top of Iduk bash [11].

The semantic meaning of *ηduk* is 1) ‘sacred’, ‘sent by God’, ‘blessed’; ‘honor’, ‘respect’, ‘esteem’ in Kirghiz, Khakas and Altay languages; ‘famous’, ‘well-known’; ‘glorious’, ‘precoius’. 2) ‘week’ in Karachay-Balkar language. 3) ‘ghosts of rivers, forests and etc.’ in Altay and Khakas languages. 4) ‘brings happiness’ in Kirghiz and Altay languages. 5) ‘cattle, which was dedicated to victim’ in Yakut language. 6) ‘highness or high’ [23]. *ηduk* literary ‘sent’ but used only in the sense of ‘sent’, i.e. dedicated to God, hence ‘sacred’ in a more general sense. The phrase *Iduk qut* ‘the sacred favor of heaven’ was early adopted as a royal title by some tribes. In course of time its origin was forgotten and in Sanskrit it is spelt *ηduk qut* and given a false etymology survived in various forms *Iyýk*, *I:k*, *Izyk* [12]. All of the given meanings are related to each other by complex semantic link, except the meaning of ‘week’. Perhaps in Karachay-Balkar language it is the result of spreading of concrete ‘Lord day (Sunday)’ meaning. The ‘Lord day’ is also implies something related to the glorious. In *ηduk Baš* place name seme *baš* denotes ‘beginning, origin’ and ‘head’ [12]. In this respect we relate this place name to mountain. Generally in Old Turk representation all mountains meant something sacred. Because it was the only connecting link with Tengri (God) divinity. They prayed and asked God for prosperity. Each mounatin had its own ghost. They thought that ghosts of mountains were ancestors of Old Turks. Mountain ghosts mainly featured in fairy tales, legends and myths. These myths are still survived in the

language of Turkic peoples. The mountain ghosts had not only helped and protected people from all harm and evil spirits, but it also demanded the rules of human behavior toward him and his vegetation and animals living on its territory. People could not hunt, fish, graze sheep, shout, whistle, sing on the sacred mountain. The mountain ghost did not allow any violations toward the animals, vegetation, places, especially careless handling of fire and etc. If the rules were violated they were often punished by different diseases.

*Baybaliq* is met in Selengian stone, situated in Mogoin Shine-Ussu in Mongolia, memorial complex in honor of El Etmish Bilge Kagan (5): *añčip s...čg...n... sog[da]k tavgačka selenede bay baliq yapiti bertim*. – I odered Sogdians and Chinese to build Baybaliq at Selenga river. Clauson differently understands the given sentence and translated it: “so I had Baybaliq built on the Selenga for traveling Sogdians and Chinese” [11].

The seme *Bayliq* in this place names denotes ‘city, burg or town’ [12]. *Bay* as a component of place names and proper names gives the meaning of ‘rich, well-off, wealthy, abundant, sufficiency’; ‘proprietor, rich man’ in all Turkic languages; ‘wealth’ in Tatar language e.g. *Ata Bayi* ‘inheritance’; ‘the noble lord’; ‘rich man’, in some with extended meanings like ‘a member of upper classes’ and ‘husband’ [25]. All these meanings are semantically linked. *Bay* has the meaning of ‘abundance’ as well as *Bar* ‘have, having’ in a social sense. We suppose that *Baybaliq* place name is characterized as the burg (city) where everything was in abundance and sufficiency.

*Temir Qapıγ* is met in Kultegin (3-4): *jenču ügüz keče temir qapıγka süledim* – Passing Yenču River I went to war until Temir Qapıγ [11].

*Qapıγ* gives the meaning of ‘gate, door’ [20]. The motivating basis *Temir* is characterized the feature of natural resources: 1) ‘iron’ [12]; and also used in the content of place names and proper names. In Kazakh language there are phrases with *Temir*, in which it denotes ‘iron, strong as iron, protection’. It is saved in proper names as *Temirbek* meant ‘very strong man as iron’. Possibly in *Temir Qapıγ* place name the seme *Temir* means ‘iron’ as well as ‘protection’ and implies ‘protected gates’, the gates could protect Turkic people. *Temir Qapıγ* is on the mountain pass Buzgala, along the upper tributaries of the Amu-Darya, it is a pass on the road between Samarkand and Balkh [26]. In history it is known as ‘Iron Gate’ the one of important geographical point in the ancient Turkic period.

*Altun Yiš* is met in Tonukuk's monument (31): '*altun yišda olurun' tedi* – 'Stay in Altun earth' he said [11].

The same *yiš* denotes 'mountain forest' [12]. The motivating basis *Altun* gives the meaning of 'gold' in all Turkic languages; 'gold coin' in Chuvash, Uzbek and Turkish languages; 'cuprum' in Yakut language [23]. We suppose that in the given place name *Altun* denotes only 'gold' without any figurative meanings. As we mentioned above through linguistic study of lexeme '*Altay*' and its phonetic divergence Miller put forward the assumption that the place name '*Altay*' is related to *Altun* and indicated the existence of gold in that territory [3]. *Altun~Alton* is pro-Turkic words penetrated into Mongolian language and then spread further into the other languages [23]. Now *Altay* (the modern Altay mountain forests) – the forests on the mountain system of Asia, located on the territory of Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolian Republic and China [27].

Concluding the subgroup of these place names we see that Old Turks in nomination geographical object used descriptive approach, i.e. each place name, contained the lexis as *Altun*, *Temir*, *Bay* or *Iduk* say about specific characteristics of geographical object.

**Toponyms, Consisting of Numerals:** The reason of using numerals in the structure of place names and set phrases is not fortuity in the language system of Turkic people. They also have a sacred character and strong link with the traditions of Turkic people. We try to consider *Tokuz*, *Beš*, *Üč*, contained in *Toquz Ersin*, *Bešbaliq*, *Üč Birkü* place names.

*Toquz Ersin* is fixed in Kultegin monument (3): *bergerü toquz ersinke tegi süledim töpötki kičig tegmedim*. – On the right side (to the south) I went to war until Toquz Ersin. A little had left until Tibet [11].

The semantic meaning of *Toquz* is 'nine' (in all sources). The numeral *Tokuz* in nomadic representation implies 'critical state of being' [20]. In this meaning it was saved in some set phrases of Kazakh language: *Toquz aip tartti* 'to serve the greatest punishment', *Toquz joldin torabi* 'meeting place of many roads', *Toquz kirli bir sirli* 'a man, who has a lot of skills and talents', *Toquz katunnin tolgagi katar keldi* 'arising of a lot of affairs' [24]. Taking into consideration all of these meanings and set phrases, in which *Toquz* is differently used, we suppose that in place name *Tokuz Ersin* it doesn't give only the meaning of numeral but the sense of something 'critical, big, huge, a lot of'. Perhaps it was related to the huge territory. The text explains that this place name was

a border reached by Bilge Kagan. *Toquz Ersen* is considered as the border areas in the south and located near Tibet.

*Bešbaliq* is met in the text of Bilge Kagan monument (28): *otuz yaşyma beşbalık tapa süledim altı yolu bünüpdüm* – When I was six I joined the army on Beshbalik. I fought seven times [11].

*Beš* directly gives the meaning of 'five' in all Turkic languages [12]. In figurative meaning in the content of set phrases it keeps religious sense: *beš azün* 'five worlds', *beš qutlar* 'five elements of being', *beš jukmak* 'five classes or five levels of being'. But the meaning of *Beš* directly implies the numeral 'five'. It is possible to say that *Bešbaliq* occurs from five burgs (cities). Describing Uighurs Makhmud Kashgari explained that this province consisted of five burgs (cities) Sulmi, Kochu, Janbalik, Beshbalik, Yengibalik made by Zulkarnain - Makedonian Alexander [28]. *Bešbaliq* was a capital of Ughur Khanate in XIII century. At present day it is Jimasar autonomous region of China.

*Üč Birkü* is fixed in Selengian stone (Shine-Ussu): *keyre başynta üç birküde kan süsi [birle] katıltım*. – At the source of Keyre (River), Üč Birkü I joined the Kagan's horde [12].

*Üč*: 1) 'three' in all Turkic languages [20]; 2) 'five' in the Kirghiz games is popular used; 3) 'thrice, three times' in Chuvash languages; 4) 'blood relation, kinsman' in Chaghatay languages [23]. The semantic link of the second and fourth meanings with the rest is unclear. There is Ramstedt's hypothesis on relativity of Turkic *Üč* 'three' and Tungus *Uču* 'break, split' [29]. But we suppose that in *Üč Birkü* place name *Üč* means numeral 'three' without any figurative sense.

So numerals also is widely used by Old Turks in nominating geographical objects. They played a role of numbering geographical objects in capacity of 'gathering or separating' as well as sacral symboling of religious world view of the ancient Turks.

**Ethnotoponyms:** Among the various groups of toponyms special place belongs to ethnotoponyms. They are an evidence of preserved names of the ancient tribes, peoples and other ethnic groups. Ethnotoponyms are the only evidence of forgotten and disappeared peoples. Studying place names we enter into ethnography and ethnic history. The spreading process of ethnic names in a territory occupied by representatives of a particular ethnic group began in the ancient times. Therefore ethnotoponyms could be considered as one of the oldest

types of place names. Since the early stages of civilization ethnic names were used as territorial designations. We look at some ancient ethnotoponyms as *Töpöt*, *Bayırqu*, *Bökli*, *Keñeres*, fixed in Orkhon monuments.

*Töpöt* is met in the text of Kultegin monument (12): *töpöt kaγanta bölün kelti*. – Bolun came from Tibet [11].

*Töpöt* is noted as geographical object, ethnos, ‘Tibetan’ related to the language [20]. *Töpöt* – is modern Tibet. Archeological discoveries show that Tibet has been occupied by humans from prehistoric times. To which ethnic group Tibetans belonged is unknown. There are literary records written about Tibetans. The earliest of these are the references in the Shang Chinese oracle bone written inscription. The first contacts of Tibetans with outside world begun from two embassies sent to China in 608 and 609. These embassies must be connected with the outcome of the war between the Chinese and the Aza (Mongolian-speaking people of northern origin known as Togon or Aza in Tibetan). The emperor of Yang-ti of the Sui dynasty wanted to regulate the routes to the West. But prepotency over the routes was between the Turks and Aza. For this reason Yang-ti had his minister P’ei Chu persuaded T’ieh-le Turks to assault the Aza. In 608 since the Aza were their enemies Turks defeated on them. Chinese armies pressed in to Aza territory and had conquered all the territory up to the tribes that then separated the Tibetan state from the Aza. Then Aza freed themselves from the Chinese and regained their power. The reign of Khri Sron Brtsan made the young kingdom Empire, which had known to the world as ‘Tibet’ [30].

*Bayırqu* is met in the text of Kultegin monument (4): *jugari jir bayırqu jirine tegi süledim*. – I went with army to the north to the land Bayırqu [11].

*Bayırqu* is fixed as: 1) ‘ethnic tribes *Bayırqu*, lived in the north or north-east of the Turks’; 2) ‘proper name’ [12]. *Bayırqu* is a geographical object, which was owned by *Bayırqu* tribal alliance in the VIII century. It covers a vast area of Inshan Mountain in the south-east up to Ak Kol in the north. *Bayırqu* consisted of 17 confederations. In 749-750 17 tribes of *Bayırqu* were divided into two wings, Toguz-Oghuz (‘Toles’ wing) and Sekiz-Oghuz (‘Tardush’ wing). Later Toguz-Oghuz became ‘Kerayits’ and Sekiz-Oghuz - ‘Naymans’ [31]. Kerayits and Naymans were a part of the Kazakh Khanate in XV century.

*Bökli* is found in the text of Kultegin monument (8): *ilgerü küün tüün tıysıqda bökly qaganqa tegi süledübirimiz*. – Forward to the east we went to war until Bokli kagan [11].

*Bökly* is noted as geographical name of steppe, geographical name of chain of mountains and ethnical name of people [20]. *Bökly* was the northern Korean state of Koguryo [32]. The word *Bökly* is a title of the ruler of this country, transcribed in Chinese texts [20]. This conclusion was recently reaffirmed by the Tibetan data evidence of VIII-IX centuries. The document of the VIII century was written in the Uighur language and then translated into Tibetan. It contains the information about ethnopolitical geography of Central Asia and *Bökly* [33].

*Keñeres* is mentioned in the text of Kultegin (39): *soγdak bodun etejin tejin yenčü ügüzüg keče temir qapıγka tegi süledimyz anta kesre kara türgeş bodun yaγı bolmiş keñeres tapa bardı*. – For getting well Sogdians we passed Yenčü River and went to war up to Temir Kapıq. There were Black Turges people become evil to us. We went against Keñeres [11].

*Keñeres* is fixed as one of the ethnical tribes of Turks [20]. *Keñeres* consists of the base *Keñer*~*Keñir* and archaic ending *-es* ~*-eş*. The remarkable for learning the names of rivers with the same endings *-s*, *-as*, *-es*, *-eş*: Tekes, Kunes, Talas, Keles. The base *Keñer* was noted in Arabian sources in IX century as the name of down flow of Syrdariya (*Keñger*). Kenger was saved in the map of modern Kazakhstan in capacity of rivers *Keñgir*, *Sarykeñgir*, *Qarakeñgir*, *Jezdikeñgir* in Ulatau mountains (Central Kazakhstan). *Keñgir* is a confluent of Sarysu River, the ancient riverbed, which is flew into Syrdariya in Kyzylorda region [34]. Hence, *Keñeres* related to Sarysu-*Keñir* and flanked on the north to the valleys of the Syr Darya and Chu. The semantic aspect of this toponym is discovered by Turkic material, e.g. *Keñer* gives the meaning of ‘wide, huge, abundant’ in Kirghiz language, ‘expanse’ in all Turkic languages [35].

#### **Antropotoponyms or Toponyms, Including Social and Class Titles:**

The forming process of place names from names and surnames turned up productive way for the ancient Turks. The toponymic nomination, coming from the man and his activity, is closely associated with personal names, nicknames. The anthroponyms most often found in the place names created by man or had contact with a place. The existence of personal names in toponymic structure says about event or a particular fact. Antropotoponyms allow you to restore the names of their ancestors. We know that Old Turkic personal names mostly consisted of title names. Generally Old Turks took their names during all life and according to the acts they did. In this instance personal names played a descript role

in their life. That is why the place names we consider include anthroponyms as well as social and class titles, which mean the same. They are *Toᅇa-tegin*, *Qadırqan*, *Qatun*<sup>^</sup>, fixed in Old Turkic monuments.

*Toᅇa-tegin* is met in text of Kultegin (7): *oza kelmiş süsin Kültigin ayıtıp tonra bir uyus alpaıuon erig tona tigin joıyında ıgırıp ölürtimiz.* – Surrounding killed ten soldiers and one hero of bonded tribe Tongra on the sacred place Tona-tegin [11].

*Toᅇa-tegin* is fixed as proper name, social or class title name and prince title [20]. *Tegin* is often used in the components of personal names. Primary *Tegin* meant ‘slave’ [36]. Afrasiab’s children glorifying their father used to call slave themselves. When they addressed to their father they used *Tegin* in this meaning. Distinguishing approach from the real slave was the usage of the other additional names, e.g. in *Alp tegin*, *Kuç tegin*, *Kümüř tegin* gives the meaning of ‘title’. In *Bekeç Arslan tegin* it means ‘prince’ [7].

*Qadırqan* is met in text of Bilge Kagan (39): *ilgerü qadırqan jüřıı asa bodunıı ança qonturtımız ança itdimiz.* – Forward we settled the people behind Qadırqan. We equipped them [11].

*Qadırqan* is noted as geographical object at present Khingan Mountains in China [20]. *Qadırqan* is mountain range of modern North China [31]. There are interesting versions of the origin of the place name. One of them: *Qadırqan* is a ‘vulture bird’ (in Mongolian). *Qadır* means ‘strong, firm’. Thence Karakhanids Khans were named as *Qadırqan* ‘very strong Khan’ [23]. Makhmud Kashgari also noted the link between Turkic *Qadır* ‘strong’ and Arabian *Qadyr* ‘powerful’ [36]. It is possible to think that this name had totemic meaning of ‘strong bird’. Old Turks used to iconize the animals and birds. The numerous anthroponyms, which are based on the names of birds and animals, support the idea that in the ancient period the religious worldview of Old Turks closely related to birds. Most often they used the names of birds were different by rapid flight or force.

*Qatun* is met in Uyuk-Turan monument (E 3): *üç yetmiş yaşımqa adrıltım egök qatun yerimqe adrıltım.* – I died when I was sixty three years old and I lost my earth and water Egök and Qatun.

*Qatun* is fixed as ‘donna’, ‘the noble lady’, ‘the woman of noble birth’, ‘wife of the ruler or noble man’; ‘social status or class title’; ‘geographical object’ [20]. Now *Qatun* is the main artery river of the Altai Mountains. In this way the place names, contained class

titles, have significant place in Turkic Onomastics. The presence of any titles in the place names help us reconstruct the name of Kaghans lived in that period.

## CONCLUSION

The considered methodological basis of the problems, as well as the linguistic analysis of onomastic material of Orkhon monuments enabled us to come to the following conclusions:

- The colors and numerals had a high importance in the life of Old Turks as they are reflected sacral and religious character. The special attitude of Old Turks toward colors and numerals are preserved in Old Turkic place names and modern Turkic languages in general;
- The nominalization process of places had the descriptive approach, where specific characteristics of landscape and natural resources were regarded by Old Turks.
- The place names may be enclosed social, political and religious evaluation of geographical object;
- The ethnotoponyms and anthrotoponyms draw a picture of tribal and clan constitution of Old Turks.

In the given article we tried to analyze place names in complex as anthroponyms, ethnonyms and toponyms are in a close relationship. The given data has a value for the history of Turkic peoples.

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