

## CHRONOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION AND HISTORICAL-ETYMOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF UZBEK HYDRONYMS

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**Abstract:** Hydronyms function as enduring historical monuments, preserving the ethnographic, socio-political, and linguistic heritage of a region. This paper investigates the chronological classification and etymological origins of Uzbek hydronyms based on diachronic textual evidence. By critically analyzing previous chronological frameworks, this study proposes a refined bipartite classification: Historical and Modern hydronyms.

**Key words:** Hydronymy, Uzbek language, chronological classification, etymology, linguistic substratum, historical linguistics, archaisms.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Hydronyms (names of water bodies) are products of deep historical evolution. Every hydronym encapsulates fragments of human history, reflecting the ethnic composition, cultural development, and daily life of the populations that interacted with these water sources. In the context of the Uzbek language, hydronyms serve as linguistic artifacts, providing evidence of ancient languages and historical events mentioned in foundational texts such as the Avesta, Mahmud al-Kashgari's *Divan Lughat al-Turk*, and Babur's *Baburnama*. Establishing a chronological classification of hydronyms is a complex but essential task in toponymy. Previous scholars have attempted to categorize place names based on their period of origin. For instance, Z. Do'simov classified toponyms into archaisms, historicisms, and neo-toponyms. However, this terminology is flawed from a lexicological perspective, as ancient names still in active use (e.g., Orol, Buxoro) cannot strictly be termed "archaisms." Similarly, N. Oxunov divided names merely into "old" (pre-October Revolution) and "new" names, a division based more on political ideology than linguistic criteria.

The objective of this paper is to propose a more accurate chronological classification of Uzbek hydronyms and to conduct a historical-etymological analysis of the ancient linguistic elements embedded within them, thereby tracing the socio-linguistic history of Uzbekistan.

### 2. METHODS

This research employs a descriptive-analytical methodology combined with diachronic (historical) and etymological analysis.

**Data Collection:** A corpus of historical hydronyms was compiled using ancient manuscripts (e.g., Avesta, Baburnama, Abdullanoma) and contemporary toponymic maps of Uzbekistan (specifically focusing on Namangan, Bukhara, Tashkent, and Khorezm regions).

**Etymological Analysis:** The morphological and lexical roots of the hydronyms were analyzed to identify the source languages (e.g., ancient Turkic, Sogdian, Persian) of the generic geographical indicators.

**Theoretical Evaluation:** Existing chronological classifications in Uzbek toponymy were critically evaluated to formulate a new, linguistically sound categorization model.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Proposed Chronological Classification

To resolve the contradictions in previous scholarly works, this study proposes a refined chronological classification dividing Uzbek hydronyms into two main categories: Historical Hydronyms, Modern Hydronyms

Historical hydronyms represent names that emerged during various stages of national history, carrying significant socio-cultural, political, and ethnic information. Examples include Sirdaryo, Norin, Qalmoqariq, Qashqasoy, and Karki kechuvi.

### 3.2. Sub-classification of Historical Hydronyms

A critical finding of this research is the necessity to distinguish between historical hydronyms that are still in use and those that are obsolete. Historical hydronyms are therefore sub-divided into:

**Active (Ancient) Historical Hydronyms:** Names originating in antiquity that remain actively used in the modern Uzbek lexicon without losing their communicative function. Examples include Norin, Chirchiq, Zarafshon, and Amudaryo. **Archaic (Obsolete) Historical Hydronyms:** Names found exclusively in historical manuscripts that have fallen out of use and possess modern doublets. For example, the Syr Darya was historically known as Yaxartes (Yaksart), Xashart, Danu, and Yincho'g'uz; the Zarafshon was known as Politimet, Namik, and Kuhak; and the Chirchiq river was known as Parak or Obi Turk.

### 3.3. Linguistic Substrata and Etymological Findings

Historical hydronyms reveal the profound influence of ancient languages that once dominated the territory of Uzbekistan. The morphological analysis identified several key linguistic substrata in the generic terms for water bodies: **Ancient Turkic Elements:** Words such as o'g'uz (river, water) found in O'g'uzsoy; qoq (accumulated/stagnant water) found in Oyqoq, Oynaqoq; and jo'g'a (irrigation canal) found in Sarijo'g'a.

**Khorezmian Elements:** The ancient term yop (canal) is heavily preserved in Khorezm and Karakalpakstan: Uyg'uryop, Chatliyop, Churchiyop.

**Sogdian Elements:** The terms rud (river) and dak/dag (stream) are preserved in names like Shoxrud, Qalqonrud, Rudak, Sangardak.

**Iranian/Persian Elements:** The terms kom (large canal) and jo'y (canal branch) are visible in Shopurkom, Jo'ybor, and Xonariq.

### 3.4. Ethnonymic Evidence

Historical hydronyms also serve as ethnographic maps. Many ancient canals and streams were named after the tribes that settled near them or constructed them (ethno-hydronyms). Examples include Qalmoqariq (Kalmyk canal), Uyg'uryop (Uyghur canal), Naymansoy (Naiman stream), and Quramaariq, providing clear evidence of tribal migration patterns.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The analysis demonstrates that classifying ancient, actively used names as "archaisms" is linguistically inaccurate. A name like Sirdaryo is historically ancient, but it is not archaic, as it functions daily in modern speech. Therefore, the proposed bipartite model (Active vs. Archaic Historical Hydronyms) provides a much more accurate reflection of the current sociolinguistic reality.

Furthermore, the etymological deconstruction of names like Abdullaxon bandi (Abdullaxon's dam) illustrates the diachronic processes of morphological reduction in toponymy. Historical records show this reservoir was built by Bukhara's ruler Abdullaxon II in 1582. Linguistically, the original genitive phrase Abdullaxonning bandi naturally evolved into the more compact Abdullaxon bandi.

The preservation of Sogdian (rud) and ancient Khorezmian (yop) affixes within a predominantly Turkic grammatical structure highlights the linguistic assimilation that occurred in Central Asia. Even as the spoken languages shifted from Eastern Iranian branches to Turkic, the geographical nomenclature retained the phonetic and lexical fossils of the previous inhabitants. These obsolete doublets (e.g., Parak vs. Chirchiq) are occasionally resurrected in modern literature (as seen in the works of writer Mirkarim Osim) to invoke a specific historical stylistics and temporal color.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Uzbek hydronyms are not mere geographical labels but complex historical archives. The proposed chronological classification effectively categorizes these names without violating lexicological principles. Etymological analysis proves that the hydronymic system of Uzbekistan is highly stratified, containing preserved lexemes from ancient Turkic, Sogdian, and Khorezmian languages. Ethno-hydronyms further map the historical demography of the region. Studying both active and archaic historical hydronyms allows researchers to reconstruct the linguistic, cultural, and political evolution of Central Asia. Future regional conferences should encourage the mapping of these ancient suffixes (e.g., -rud, -yop) to create a comprehensive toponymic atlas of Uzbekistan. Furthermore, the paper examines the linguistic substrata within historical hydronyms, identifying ancient Turkic, Sogdian, Khorezmian, and Iranian lexical elements. The findings demonstrate that obsolete hydronyms (archaisms) and their modern doublets provide crucial data for understanding the linguistic evolution of Central Asia.

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