

Etymological, Lexical and Historical Analysis of the Toponyms 'Fergana' and 'Dawan'

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ABSTRACT: In this article the origins of the toponyms 'Fargona' and 'Dawan (Day-yuan)' have been discussed. The meanings and origins of the toponyms 'Fargona' and 'Dawan (Day-yuan)' have been analyzed with the research of geographical situation of the Fergana Valley, etymology of the toponym 'Fargona', lexical-semantic analysis and historical origin of the toponym after learning some works of Uzbek, Russian and Tajik researchers and we attempted to clarify the meaning of Fargona, Dawan (Day-yuan). In the article other names of the valley like Fakhanna and Poluona are also mentioned. In the conclusion of the article the meaning of the place names 'Fargona' and 'Dawan (Day-yuan)' has been given.

KEYWORD: Fergana Valley, Fargona, Dawan, Day-yuan, Chinese recordings, Chinese hieroglyphs, mountains, Central Asia, geographical situation, etymological origin, Persian, Chinese, Sanskrit, the Sogdian language, lexical-semantic analysis, great bowl.

I. Introduction.

Toponyms have been created since ancient times and have been used in the vernacular. They have lived for hundreds, even thousands of years, and have passed from century to century, from generation to generation. This is evidenced by the names of many cities, rivers, and seas mentioned in ancient written monuments and preserved to this day. Speaking about toponyms we are going to make some research on the place name 'Fergana' that has not been given an exact explanation of the toponym yet. But what is the exact meaning of the toponym 'Fergana'? Here we shall try to give a thorough explanation to this blurred problem.

The toponym 'Fergana' is written as **Фарғона** with Uzbek Cyrillic letters or **Farg'ona** with Uzbek Latin letters, that's why two kinds of alphabet might be used in the article. The place name is written as **Fergana** in English, and **Фергана** in Russian.

The Fergana valley is the pearl of Uzbekistan, and it is situated in the most comfortable part of Central Asia. The researches have been carried out on the toponym 'Ferghana' by many scientists, such as Suyun Korayev, Tolib Ernazarov, Yusuf Muhammadaliyev and Ablat Khujayev. Besides it has also been learned by Russian scientists V. Livshits and E. Murzayev. Besides, more information about Ferghana Valley can be found in the recordings of Chinese history, which dates back to more than 2000 years of time. And there is also a gap that is not filled in Uzbek toponymy in explaining the real meaning of the toponym 'Fargona'. So, the meaning of the toponym 'Fergana' has not been exactly explained, and scientists say different things about the etymology of the toponym 'Fargona'.

The Fergana Valley is a place which is surrounded with mountains, at the same time these mountains disconnected this area from other parts of Central Asia. Only one part of the valley is not closed by mountains, it is the south-western part of the valley. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur wrote about the mountains around the Ferghana Valley and the western part of the valley confirming the fact. Besides a lot of valuable information about the place names in Ferghana Valley can be found in “Baburnama”.

This work, therefore, makes an attempt to clarify the real meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’ studying the ethimology of the toponym, its landscape situation, history and relations with other languages those were spoken in the area of Central Asia.

II. Materials and methods

During the research the following methods have been used as the main ones: geographical situation of the Fergana Valley, etymology of the toponym ‘Fargona’, lexical-semantic analysis and historical origin of the toponym. The materials for the study of the toponym were represented by the deep investigations of Uzbek scientists whose books had been dedicated to the history and toponyms.

Geographical situation of the Fergana Valley. The Fergana Valley is a valley in Central Asia spread across eastern Uzbekistan, southern Kyrgyzstan and northern Tajikistan[1].

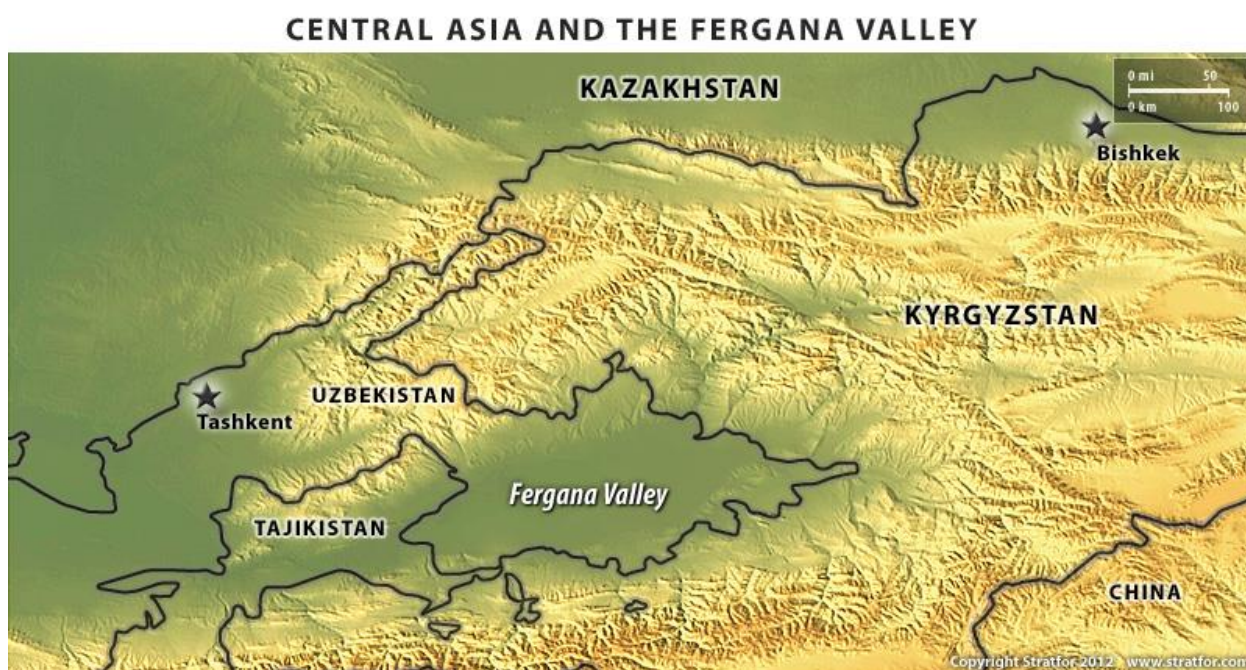


Figure 1. The map of the Fergana Valley.

As we have mentioned above the geographical situation of the Ferghana Valley I want to give some information about the valley written in ‘Baburnama’ by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur in 1530s. “There are mountains around the valley. There are no mountains to the western side of it, and there are Samarkand and Khujand. From this side not any enemy can come in winter”[2,5]. Another translation can be found from ‘Baburnama’ on the website <https://depts.washington.edu>: “Fergana is situated in the fifth climate and at the limit of settled habitation. On the east it has Kashghar; on the west, Samarkand; on the south, the mountains of the Badakhshan border; on the north, though in former times there must have been towns such as Almaligh, Almatu and Yangi which in books they write Taraz, at the present time all is desolate, no settled population whatever remaining, because of the Moghuls and the Uzbeks. Fergana is a small country, abounding in grain and fruits. It is girt round by mountains except on the west, i.e. towards Khujand and

Samarkand, and in winter an enemy can enter only on that side”[3]. Indeed, the Fergana Valley is surrounded with mountains, in the south the Alay mountain ranges, in the north-west the Kurama mountain ranges, in the north the Chotqol mountains, in the East the Fergana mountain ranges [Fig. 1]. But Babur did not give any information about the formation of the toponym ‘Fargona’, that’s why we cannot give any explanation to the toponym using ‘Baburnama’.

The etymological origin of the toponym ‘Fergana’. Toponymists say different views about the etymology of the toponym ‘Fergana’. They forward two ideas that they try to prove. In this case the toponymists can be divided into two groups, the first group who connect the toponym ‘Fergana’ to the Persian origins, and the other say that it comes from people’s etymology.

In order to get full information about the etymology of the toponym ‘Fargona’ we have to look through the doctoral thesis by Tolib Enazarov. Enazarov has always come near to the people’s etymology in explaining the meaning of this toponym supporting people’s etymology. He showed etymological analysis of the toponym in his thesis saying: People’s representatives say that there used to be gorgeous and beautiful girls here. People called them ‘fairies’ (in Uzbek or Persian ‘*pari*’), and their place of residence was called the ‘Парихона’ in the sense of *the fairies’ living place*[4,62].

According to the local people of Fergana the toponym originates from the Persian words ‘парі’ and ‘хона’ and these words formed a place name joining together as ‘парихона’ which has the meaning of ‘the place where lived beautiful girls’. Here, people’s etymology can’t be basis in explaining the meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’ and we can say that this view is not compatible with this research.

Lexical-semantic analysis of the toponym. Several researchers tried to clarify the real meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’ in their works. Reading thoroughly those works we can see different approaches in clarifying the meaning and origin of the toponym. Here I learned the works of Obiddin Tukhtasunov, Tolib Enazarov, Yusufjon Ahmadaliyev, Zarip Dosimov, Eduard Murzaev, Ablat Khudjaev and tried to find the real meaning of the toponym. Besides I climbed the Kurama mountains in order to understand the researchers view about the Fergana Valley, and having seen the landscape of the valley my first impression was that the place really reminded me a huge Uzbek pot surrounded with mountains. I would say that the toponym ‘Fargona’ is a metaphoric toponym which resembles an Uzbek pot or a bowl. If we look at the national encyclopedia of Uzbekistan, we can read full information about Fergana, also the meaning of the toponym ‘Fergana’ included in the encyclopedia: Scientists say that the word ‘Фарғона’ was mentioned in Sogdian writings in the form of ‘Парғана (Pargana)’, ‘Прағана (Pragana)’ thirteen centuries ago and it means ‘a small district’ in Indian-Sanskrit, and ‘a valley among the mountains’ in Persian[5,192]. Sanskrit is a classical language of South Asia, and this language came to Central Asia upon Buddhist culture. I wouldn’t say that Fargona doesn’t mean a small district in Sanskrit according to my research and I looked through Sanskrit dictionary on the internet. Then I tried to do some translations of the words ‘big’ and ‘pot’ from the Sanskrit language using the website www.learnsanskrit.cc and the result was amazing. There can be found the following Sanskrit words बृहत् brhat – big, घट ghata – pot, the words which are closely connected to the formation of the place name, i.e. the meaning of the toponym may be ‘a great pot’. Here analyzing the origin of the toponym we witness the following toponymic formation process: बृहत् घट brhatghata → bragada → bragana → pragana → pargana → farg‘ona → **Farg‘ona**. The ‘t’ sound in the word घट ‘ghata’ might have changed to ‘n’. Besides in Sanskrit the adjective परिग ‘pariga’ means ‘surrounding’.

But we can also see some wrong approaches in clarifying the meaning of the toponym ‘Fergana’ in the works of researchers. Let’s see into the works of the researchers mentioned above before coming to a conclusion.

Reading the article by Obiddin Tukhtasinov we can see wrong ideas about the name ‘Fergana’. According to Tukhtasinov the origin of the word “Фарғона” consists of the combination of two words “фap” and “ғона”. Here he mentions that some scientists say that the name “Фарғона” has the meaning of ‘foothills of a mountain’ and ‘a valley among the mountains’, but the mountain is found in the word. He explains that the word ‘фap’ has the meanings of ‘leader, head, figurehead’, i.e. expresses ‘the king and aristocrats’. And the other part of the name “Фарғона” is ‘ғона’ that is the other form of the word ‘хона’ (a house, home, room), the sound ‘x’ was pronounced as ‘f’ because the local people – the Sogdians used the sound ‘f’ very often, that’s why the sound ‘x’ was pronounced as ‘f’. But in the Sogdian language the room was ‘kat’ or ‘kad’, this was also mentioned in the article. Tukhtasinov concludes that the original meaning of the toponym “Фарғона” is the home of castles, the place of kings and leaders, i.e. the meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’ is the home of the living kings. On the other side he also includes that in Chinese writings and ancient name of Fergana is Dawan and he proposes that this is the changed form of the Persian word ‘devon’[6]. Here the researcher is absolutely wrong. Because the word ‘devon’ is an Arabic word and it is not connected to Fargona. Coming to an end of all of these Tukhtasinov’s views do not have any scientific basis.

Having looked through the doctoral thesis by Tolib Enazarov, we can find two different views. One of them is people’s etymology that has been discussed above, and the other is a lexical and semantic analysis made by the researcher. In Uzbek the word ‘*хона*’ means *a room*, and in Tajik it means *a house*. At the same time he shows another meaning of the toponym: in Urdu the place name ‘Fargona’ is written as Parkana, that means “a piece of region”, “a district that includes several villages”. These notes belong to the lexical meaning of the word. Enazarov here also forwards the words “parkana, bargana” in the Persian and Indian languages, and these words’ meaning clarify the meaning of the toponym: *баргана* > *паркана* > *фаркана* > *фаргона* > **Фарғона**. Here he concludes that this idea is more grounded and has the basis[4,63]. But later in his thesis he shows that the toponym ‘Fargona’ is the changed form of the word ‘парихона’: Toponyms formed by the phonetically different sounding of sounds in words. For example, the toponym ‘Fargona’ was changed into the form of **Фарғона** in the process of motivation, i.e. *парихона* > *пархона* > **Фарғона**[4,119].

Uzbek scientist Ablat Khujaev gives full information about the history of the Fergana Valley and the origin of the toponym ‘Fergana’. We can find this information in his book called ‘Some information about the history of Fergana’ (Фарғона тарихига оид маълумотлар. Фарғона, 2013). Ablat Khujaev, having learned old Chinese chronicles, showed some mistakes of Russian scientists who had translated the name of Fergana from Chinese, and he says that there is confusing and incorrect information about the place name because of their translation. Yes, Ablat Khujaev was right in this case because the Chinese name of Fergana has always been taught as **Dawan** in history books even in higher education. According to Ablat Khujaev the Chinese name of Fergana is **Day-yuan**, he proved it with the old pronunciation of the Chinese hieroglyphs. Having learned deeply Chinese sources which were written until VI century BC, Ablat Khujaev found out that the name of ancient country Fergana and its capital city had the same name and was expressed with a Chinese hieroglyph **yuan** (宛 modern pronunciation is **Wǎn**) which meant ‘a plain surrounded with mountains’. To prevent confusion ancient Chinese historians named the country as **Day-Yuan** (大宛) modern pronunciation is **Dawǎn** – Great Parkona) by adding **da** (大 - great) to the name[7,13].

Historical origin of the toponym. The history of the Fergana Valley is tightly connected with China as more information about the valley had been written in Chinese chronicles. In the past Fergana was a great state which had the rulings in the whole valley. Fergana was one of the developed countries of the past and was famous with handicraft and horses (according to the sources flying horses had been reminded in the Chinese chronicles). That’s why Fergana was one of the most important places which the Chinese were interested. They tried to get legendary horses of Fergana several times but those were not successful. Hence we can

understand that the Chinese had visited this valley many times in the history. Ancient Chinese rulers tried to conquer Dawan through planning alliances with nomadic people of the area. We can get full information reading the book “Сарик аждар ҳамласи” (The attack of a yellow dragon) by Mannop Egamberdiev [8, 88-91]. Of course, the purpose of their attack to Fergana was to get horses which were called ‘flying horses’.

Besides the present territory of Uzbekistan was on the crossroads of the Great Silk Road. The territory always connected the East with the West. Merchants carried various types of products. The Chinese merchants carried silk to Europe crossing the valley.

Ablat Khodjaev mentions that Dawan is the ancient name of the Fergana Valley which was given by Chinese and this toponym came to the Uzbek language through Russian translations of the resources about Central Asia. It has always been used as the ancient name of the Fergana Valley and its meaning and origin has always been unknown [7,124].

The toponym **Day-Yuan** or **Dawan** (大宛) was first mentioned in “Shi Ji” (Historical memories) by Sima Chyan in 104-91 BC [7,125]. According to this source the hieroglyph宛 (wan) in the toponym **Day-Yuan** was pronounced as “yuan”. Besides Ablat Khodjaev also mentions that the name of the Fergana Valley and the state were named as Poluona, Fakhanna in the ancient Chinese writings after V century AD and he explains that Poluona is ancient state Day-Yuan. In 941-945 a group of historians in the palace of Lu Hu showed that the place was named as Fakhanna or Puokhan, later Poluona [7,126].

Here we can say that the toponyms Poluona and Fakhanna are the Chinese transcriptions of Parkona and Fargona according to Ablat Khudjaev. He analyzes the toponyms logically and says that as Day-Yuan, paying attention to the meaning of the term; we can be sure that it is the translation of Great Parkona. Considering the meanings of ‘day’ (great) and ‘yuan’ we can understand that ‘yuan’ means ‘a place which is surrounded with mountains’, where in old Chinese the hieroglyph 宛 (yuan) meant ‘a place resembling a bowl that was surrounded with mountains’ [7,127]. In my opinion when the Chinese came up to the Fergana Valley, they observed the whole valley standing on the mountains and the valley seemed to them like a huge bowl. In fact, I witnessed myself that the valley resembles a very large green bowl or a huge Uzbek pot (i.e. қозон in Uzbek).

Analyzing logically we can say that local toponyms were translated into Chinese with hieroglyphs because every Chinese hieroglyph expresses a certain item or idea. In the eastern Persian language ‘Pargana’ or ‘Bargana’ means ‘a place surrounded with mountain with one side open’. It’s natural that the sound ‘p’ changed to ‘f’ and it was pronounced as Fargona after Arab invasion [7,128] as there is no ‘p’ sound in Arabic.

III. Results and discussion.

The study of the toponym Fergana was carried out with the following methods: geographical situation of the Fergana Valley, etymology of the toponym “Fergana”, lexical-semantic analysis and historical origin of the toponym. Having learned the works by Ablat Khujaev and Russian scientists, as well as national encyclopedia of Uzbekistan we get two toponyms which were used in the works of historians, they are Dawan or Day-yuan and Pragana or Parkona; these toponyms have been very often reminded in history books, and ancient Chinese recordings, as well.

Anybody who visits some place, it is natural that the visitor interests in the place name and the meaning of it. As a rule, the place names are not often translated on maps or in geography, history and toponymy but the meanings are explained to the people who are interested in. But the Chinese usually translated the place names into their language using hieroglyphs, we have mentioned that above.

At the same time we have learnt that there were used **Fakhanna, Poluona** as place names in ancient Chinese history recordings. We can list historical names of Fergana as follows: **Day-yuan** or **Dawan, Pragana, Parkona, Fakhanna, Poluona, Прагана, Паргана**. According to our opinion, these names are closely connected with their similar meanings.

IV. Conclusion

So, this concludes that my research on the origin of the toponyms ‘Fargona’ and ‘Dawan (Day-yuan)’ has been carried out to find their real meaning having read the works of Uzbek, Russian and Tajik researchers. While researching I studied the origin of the toponyms ‘Fargona’ and ‘Dawan (Day-yuan)’ using the four methods: geographical situation of the Fergana Valley, etymology of the toponym “Fargona”, lexical-semantic analysis and historical origin of the toponym.

In the first method I tried to explain the geographical situation of the Fergana Valley as it is very important in explaining the meaning of the toponym. Geographical situation of the valley is the key point of the meaning of the toponym “Fargana”. And I’m very sure that the place name comes out of the geographical situation of the valley.

In the second method I analyzed the views of the researcher, Tolib Enazarov, about the meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’. Enazarov’s view cannot be taken to clarify the real meaning of the toponym because the words ‘пари хона’ are the local people’s etymology and this method doesn’t clarify the real meaning of the place name. I often heard this etymology from my grandparents, too. I can’t agree to accepting this kind of explanation.

In the third method I analyzed the meaning of the toponyms ‘Fargona’ and ‘Dawan (Day-yuan)’. The toponym ‘Fargona’ was mentioned in the Sogdian sources as **Фаргона, Паргана** and **Прагана**. Fargona is a place among the mountains which comes from Persian word ‘pragana’ but the place itself reminds a huge bowl, and in my opinion, the name ‘Fargona’ also means something which looks like a huge bowl. I came to this conclusion analyzing the word ‘pragana’ logically. The sounds ‘f’ and ‘p’ often changed mutually in the speech. And Chinese ‘Dawan (Day-yuan)’ also means ‘a great bowl’. Coming to a conclusion I can say that the forwarded ideas about the meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’ do not express the real meaning of the toponym. Here I have the same opinion with Ablat Khujaev.

In the fourth method I paid attention to the historical origin of the toponyms ‘Fargona’ and ‘Dawan (Day-yuan)’. The valley had several invasions in the history and this was the key to the explanation of the origin and the meaning of the toponyms ‘Fargona’ and ‘Dawan (Day-yuan)’. In learning the history of the Fergana Valley the Chinese chronicles must be further studied and researched additionally in the future.

Coming to the conclusion the meaning of the toponym ‘Fargona’ can be explained as ‘a great bowl’ that is a place surrounded with mountains. I came to this conclusion because the appearance of the valley looks like a huge bowl. And the exact translation of Fargona into old Chinese is 大宛 ‘Day-Yuan’ (modern Chinese ‘Dawan’). So we can bravely say that Fargona means “a great bowl”. Even if you type “great bowl” in Google translate, you will get the following translation: 大碗 Dà wǎn.

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