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PROBLEMS AND APPROACHES IN THE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS NAMES IN UZBEK LINGUISTICS

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Abstract: This article analyzes the issue of studying religious names in Uzbek linguistics. The relevance of the research lies in the fact that religious names constitute an important layer of the Uzbek anthroponymic system and function not only as nominative units but also as expressions of historical memory, religious thinking, national mentality, and linguocultural experience. The article highlights the main problems in the study of religious names, including terminological ambiguity, inconsistency in structural-semantic classification, the gap between etymological and linguocultural approaches, as well as the insufficient consideration of sociolinguistic factors.

Keywords: religious name, anthroponym, onomastics, Uzbek linguistics, semantics, structure, linguoculture, sociolinguistics, etymology, naming motivation.

Introduction

Onomastics is a branch of linguistics that studies proper names, and one of its central directions is anthroponymy. Anthroponyms include personal names, surnames, nicknames, pseudonyms, and similar units. In Uzbek linguistics, fundamental research in anthroponymy has taken a systematic form, especially through the works of E.A. Begmatov. His publications from 1972, 1994, and 1998, as well as the later work “Anthroponymy of the Uzbek Language,” serve as key sources for studying Uzbek names, their spelling, semantics, and cultural layers. In addition, in the theory of onomastics, the works edited by V.A. Nikonov and A.V. Superanskaya, as well as the typological studies of A.V. Superanskaya, provide an important methodological foundation.

Religious names form a distinct layer in the Uzbek anthroponymic system. Structurally, they may consist of Arabic, Persian-Tajik, and Turkic elements; semantically, they are associated with the attributes of Allah, prophets, companions, religious-ethical concepts, faith, blessings, good wishes, and spiritual values. However, in Uzbek linguistics, the issue of a special, systematic, and comprehensive analysis of religious names has not yet been fully developed. In many cases, a religious name is equated with an Arabic name, and sometimes it is limited only to a semantic explanation. Although some recent studies have attempted to examine Uzbek anthroponymy from diachronic, linguocultural, and sociolinguistic perspectives, the specific structural-semantic mechanisms of religious names have not yet been sufficiently generalized.

Methods

The study is descriptive-analytical in nature, based on a comparative-analytical examination of fundamental sources on onomastics and anthroponymy, dictionaries of Uzbek names, and recent

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scholarly articles. The research employed descriptive methods, component analysis, structural-semantic analysis, comparative approaches, and linguocultural interpretation.

The analysis was carried out in several stages. First, the use of the concept "religious name" in scientific discourse was examined. Then, the semantic motivation and structural composition of religious names were analyzed. After that, the main approaches used in Uzbek linguistics—etymological, lexical-explanatory, diachronic, linguocultural, and sociolinguistic—were systematized. The research materials included Begmatov's lexical and theoretical works on Uzbek names, classical works on onomastic theory, and analytical articles on Uzbek anthroponymy published in recent years. This study is not an empirical statistical investigation but a theoretical-analytical work based on scientific literature and anthroponymic units.

Results

The analysis revealed at least four main problems in the study of religious names in Uzbek linguistics. First, there is a problem of terminological ambiguity. Terms such as "religious name," "Islamic name," "Arabic name," "Qur'anic name," and "sacred name" are often used interchangeably, although they are not identical. For example, not every Arabic name is necessarily a religious name; likewise, some religious names may exist in Persian-Tajik or Turkic forms. Therefore, religious names should be defined not only by their language of origin but also by their naming motivation and semantic source.

Second, the lack of a well-developed structural-semantic classification has been observed. In Uzbek linguistics, names are mostly explained in terms of meaning, but their formal structure is not always systematically described. However, structural models are highly important in religious names: one-component names (Muslima, Imron), two-component names (Nuriddin, Sayfiddin), theophoric models (Abdulloh, Abdurahmon), names formed with religious titles (Imombek, Shayxali), and complex names with religious-ethical meanings should be analyzed as separate groups.

Third, there is a tendency to limit analysis to etymological explanation. Religious names are often described simply as "Arabic, meaning such and such," but this approach does not fully reveal their cultural function, historical layer, or social usage. For example, the lexical meaning of a name does not always correspond to its religious significance in society or the parents' motivation in naming. In some cases, a name expresses faith, while in others it reflects family tradition, respect for ancestors, or modern religious identity.

Fourth, it was found that modern approaches are not sufficiently integrated. Although recent studies in Uzbek anthroponymy mention diachronic, linguocultural, and sociolinguistic aspects, religious names are not comprehensively analyzed within these frameworks. At the same time, changes in the naming system, especially in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, are closely related to social and cultural factors.

As a result, a comprehensive model for studying religious names is proposed:

1. identifying the etymological source;
2. determining the structural model;
3. revealing semantic motivation;
4. explaining linguocultural significance;

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5. describing sociolinguistic usage;
6. recording diachronic changes.

In this way, a name is understood not as a simple lexical unit but as a multi-layered onomastic phenomenon.

Discussion

The results show that religious names in Uzbek linguistics should be considered not only as onomastic units but also as linguocultural and sociolinguistic phenomena. The process of choosing a religious name is determined not only by internal linguistic structure but also by religious values, historical memory, and cultural norms of society. Therefore, religious names should be analyzed not only through their meanings but also through the question: "Why was this particular name chosen?"

Such an approach is beneficial for Uzbek linguistics in several ways. First, it prevents the automatic identification of religious names with the Arabic layer. Second, it allows the identification of nationalized religious models within the Uzbek anthroponymic system. For example, names that contain religious components but are combined with local affixes or titles reflect the internal naming potential of the Uzbek language. Third, this approach makes it possible to identify differences in modern usage of religious names, including regional, generational, gender, and social variations.

Moreover, the use of comparative Turkic material is important in the study of religious names. In the anthroponymy of other Turkic peoples, religious names are studied not only as personal naming units but also as elements shaping textual and cultural semantics. This indicates the need to expand the theoretical framework of religious name studies in Uzbek linguistics. Thus, the перспективе direction for studying religious names lies in integrating structure, semantics, etymology, linguoculture, and sociolinguistics. On this basis, a revised classification of religious names can be proposed: theophoric names, prophetic names, names based on religious-ethical concepts, wish-based names, names with religious titles, and syncretic models.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of religious names in Uzbek linguistics is a relevant and multi-layered scientific issue. The analysis shows that the main shortcomings in this field are related to terminological ambiguity, insufficient structural-semantic classification, limitation to etymological explanations, and lack of integration of modern methodologies. Religious names in the Uzbek anthroponymic system are not merely lexical units but complex onomastic phenomena that incorporate historical, religious, cultural, and social information.

Therefore, future research on religious names should focus on developing a scientific classification, studying regional and generational variations, creating corpus-based anthroponymic databases, and analyzing religious names within linguocultural and sociolinguistic contexts. Such a comprehensive approach will strengthen the theoretical foundations and practical effectiveness of studying religious names in Uzbek linguistics.

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