



## Izafet-Based Compound Oronyms In The Baburnama

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### Abstract

The article presents the naming motifs of compound oronyms in “Boburnoma” by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, explanations and interpretations are explained.

### Keywords

Oikonym, oronym, linguistic factor, non-linguistic factor, etymology, motif, isoform, component.

### Introduction

The work that brought Babur worldwide renown is the Baburnama. “Babur’s memoirs,” writes one historian of India, “are unique in their nature; in them the life of the great Turkic ruler is narrated step by step. He describes his contemporaries and compatriots with such skill that their appearance, behavior, habits, and quirks are reflected as if in a mirror.” We agree with this view and would like to expand on it. In the work the author not only provides detailed accounts of his contemporaries and compatriots, but, wherever he travels, he also gives thorough information about the toponyms of those regions, including oronyms.

### Main Part

Oronym (from Greek oros “mountain” + onoma “proper name”)—the proper name of any elevated landform rising above the earth’s surface relief (mountain, ridge, hill, peak, pass, etc.). The memoir cites more than 160 oronyms, many of which are connected by izofa. As we study the Baburnama, we witness this ourselves: Sangi oyina, Shohi Kobul, Ko’hi Safid, Darayi Nur, Kurrayi Toziyon, Dashti Shayx, Darayi Zindon, Darayi Sof, Ko’hi Jud, and others.

The term izofa is Arabic and literally means “addition” or “linking.” In Persian-Tajik, a modifier and head word—or a genitive and the word it governs—are linked by an unstressed vowel -i. In Persian grammar this linkage is called izofa. The vowel -i, which connects two words, is considered the marker of the izofa construction.

Babur describes izofa-formed oronyms in the Baburnama as follows:

Bodipech ko’tali (Bodich)—a pass east of Kabul on the road to Lamghan: “If they come by way of Nijrau, passing through Badrovd and through Qarmangriq, they reach the Bodipech pass.”

In the work, the first component in the head position of an izofa-formed oronym often belongs to common geographic terms that recur frequently, such as dara (valley), ko’h (mountain), deh (village), sang (stone/rock), tangi (gorge), ko’tal (pass), pushta (ridge), chashma (spring). Moreover, compared to izofa-formed oronyms in the relation “head + modifier” (e.g., Ko’hi Safid, “White Mountain”), there are more instances recorded of those in the “governed + genitive” relation (e.g., Darayi Zindon, “Valley of the Prison”).

Darayi Boy—a mountain valley in the province of Badghis. In 1506, on his way to Khorasan, Babur passed through it. Jahangir Mirza met Babur here: “At last the prince was compelled; when we descended from Ko’hi Sof into Darayi Boy, he came to see me.” (p. 141b).

Darayi Zindon—a mountain and valley on the northern slope of the Hindu Kush range. Babur mentions it in his description of the Kabul province, depicting its nature, fauna, and flora: “The mountains to the west are the mountains of Darayi Zindon and Daryi So’f and Gurzivon and G’arjiston; they are of one sort of mountains. Their pastures lie mostly in the ravines.” (p. 115b).

Darayi Nur Mountains — a mountain range in India. Babur noted that a monkey called bandar, trained by gypsies to perform, was found in these mountains: “Gypsies train monkeys to perform. In the Darayi Nur Mountains, on the slopes of Koh-i Safid in the Khyber area and below, they are found throughout Hindustan.” (p. 200).

Darayi Sof — one of the gorges on the northern slope of the Hindu Kush range. Babur mentions it in his description of Kabul province, depicting its nature, fauna, and flora: “The mountains to the west are the Darayi Zindon, Darayi Sof, the Gurzivon and Garjistan mountains; they are of one kind of mountain. Most of the pastures are in the valleys.” (p. 115).

Darayi Khush — a gorge in Kabul province. In 1506 Babur clashed here with a Turkmen thousand: “At the mouth of Darayi Khush, at Jangalak, we launched a raid; a few of the thousand were cut down... The Darayi Khush is a descending gorge; about half a kuroh from the mouth of the gorge there is a narrow defile.” (p. 126).

Darband-i Ohanin (Darband, Qahlug’) — the author mentions Qahlug’ on the borders of the territory ruled by Khisravshah and notes that this gorge is also called Darband-i Ohanin (“Iron Gate”): “From Qahlug’, which they also call Darband-i Ohanin, up to the Hindu Kush, the entire region that belonged to Sultan Mahmud Mirza was under his sovereign control.” (p. 105).

Darband — a gorge in the Hisor mountains. Because it is narrow, it served as a gate and had great strategic importance. Darband (Pers.): dar — “door”; dara + band — “closed, fortified.” A natural barrier or obstacle; a narrow, hard-to-pass route through the mountains. The gorge’s name is based on its natural features. In written sources its name appears in different forms but with the same meaning: in Old Turkic — Temir qapug’ (qapug’ = gate), in Persian — Darband-i Ohanin, in Arabic — Bab al-Hadid, in Mongolian — Qahlag’a. Thus, the Temir Darvoza (Iron Gate) gorge in the Boysun mountains is expressed in four languages with four different forms but with one meaning. In the memoir, the Mongolian and Persian variants — Qahlag’a, Darband-i Ohanin, and Darband — are given: “That year, when we left Samarqand and came to Hisor, all the Uzbek khans and sultans assembled, formed an alliance, and advanced upon us in force, crossing through Darband.” (p. 192). H. Hasanov also notes that this gorge has local names Buzg’olaxona (“Echkixona,” i.e., “Goat House”) and Qo’hlug’.

Dehi Ya’qub narrows — a gorge near Kabul on the road to India. The work provides information about this narrows and the river of the same name. Speaking of Mount Shahi Kabul, Babur records that it begins at the Devarin narrows and ends at this narrows: “The beginning of this mountain is at the Devarin narrows. It ends at the Dehi Ya’qub narrows.” (p. 107). In the izafet toponym, the first component functioning as the determiner is the common noun deh (“village”).

Ko’tali Zarrin — (Golden Pass) a pass between Herat and Kabul: “The road goes along the ridge and climbs upward. They call it Ko’tali Zarrin.” (p. 147).

Ko'hi Jud — The people called Jud long ruled and administered those dwelling on this mountain and in the land between the Nilob and Bhira; therefore it was named Ko'hi Jud. In other words, the mountain's name is derived from the name of the people. Formed by a noun+noun model: "About seven kuroh beyond Bhira to the north a mountain descends. In the Zafarnama and some other books they have written Ko'hi Jud for this mountain; the reason for the name was unknown, later it became clear: two kinds of people of one lineage dwell on this mountain. One is called Jud and the other Janjuha. Those on this mountain and the people and clans between the Nilob and Bhira have long been their subjects and under their command. As this mountain belongs to the Jud, they have called it Ko'hi Jud." (p. 166).

Ko'hi Mehtar Sulaymon — a mountain range west of the Indus River, now in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The oronym is a compound: Persian/Tajik ko'h "mountain" + mehtar (Persian — "great, lord," a court rank) + the anthroponym Sulaymon: "Jahongir Mirza and the begs were discussing, and some said: the mountain to the west of the Dasht, which they call Ko'hi Mehtar Sulaymon, lies between this Dasht and Duki; if one skirts its spur, the road is straight." (p. 120).

Ko'hi Safid — In the memoir the naming of Ko'hi Safid is linked to natural conditions (the persistence of snow). Babur explains this oronym thus: "... the snow on this mountain never diminishes. For this reason, they generally call it Ko'hi Safid." (p. 110.) Ko'hi Safid is Persian/Tajik: ko'h = mountain, safid = white; i.e., "White Mountain." It is an izafet toponym in an adjective-head (qualified + qualifier) relationship. The mountain received this name because the snow never melts, so it always appears white.

Sangi Oyina — a long, four-sided great boulder at the foot of a mountain near the village of Hushyor in the Isfara region. Its surface is extremely smooth; due to the abundance of metallic crystals in its composition, it looks like a mirror, reflecting the viewer's image. Because of the political situation, Babur stayed about a year in So'x and Hushyor, which gave him the chance to study Sangi Oyina in detail. He explains the stone's name as follows: "On the southeastern side of Isfara, among the ridges to the south, there lies a slab of rock; they call it 'Sangi Oyina' (Mirror Stone). Its length is roughly ten qari; in some places its height is that of a man, in others about a man's waist; like a mirror, everything is reflected in it." (p. 35.) Thus, the stone is called "Mirror Stone" because everything is reflected in it like in a mirror. Sangi oyina (mirror stone) is an onomastic unit formed by a noun + noun Persian izafet.

Pushtayi Ko'hak — a hill near Samarkand, now called Cho'pon-ota. The work notes that Amir Temur had a garden laid out at its foot. Babur saw it in a ruined state: "Another lofty structure at the foot of Pushtayi Ko'hak is an observatory, which is an instrument for making precise measurements." (p. 60).

Tangi Vag'jon — a gorge located in the mountains in the southern part of Kabul province. When Babur set out to suppress the rebellion toward Gardiz, his route passed through this gorge: "We descended into the district of Tangi Vag'jon, ate, and at the time of the noon prayer we set out from there." (p. 175).

Shohi Kobul Mountain — Babur explains the naming of this mountain as follows: "All its surroundings and sides are mountainous. The citadel is attached to the mountain. To the southwest of the citadel a smaller mountain descends. Because a building was erected on the summit of that mountain by the Shah of Kabul, they call this mountain Shohi Kobul." (p. 137.) This oronym is also formed by a noun+noun model.



Chashmayi Para — a pass to the southwest of Kabul. Its current name is Ko'tal-i Tara. In the spring of 1519, on the return from the campaign to Gardiz, part of the army traveled by way of this mountain: "Crossing over the pass of Chashmayi Para, from the Gardiz side, at the time of the obligatory prayer we emerged onto the salt plain and sent out a raiding party." (p. 175).

### Conclusion

In conclusion, izafet-based oronyms are numerous in the memoir, and the first component functioning as the head in an izafet oronym often belongs to common nouns; frequently repeated geographical terms include dara (gorge), ko'h (mountain), deh (village), sang (stone), tangi (defile), ko'tal (pass), pushta (ridge), and chashma (spring). Moreover, compared with izafet oronyms in an adjective-head relationship (e.g., Ko'hi Safid), those in a head-genitive relationship (e.g., Darayi Zindon) are recorded more often.

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