

Derivation of Oikonyms in Dido

(Concise version)

Author Nodar Ardoteli

Arnold Chikobava Institute of Linguistics (Georgia), Doctor of Philology

Email: nodariardoteli@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper presents the regularities and peculiarities of the derivation of oikonyms in Dido. It is clear, that historically the territory inhabited by Dido people had a certain area of distribution, in which the settlements were found to have both their own Dido names and Avar names. In addition, the paper provides a historical interpretation of a number of oikonyms and an attempt to establish their genesis, as illustrated by relevant examples.

Key words: Toponymy, Oikonyms, Etymology, Classification, Compound

Introduction

When studying oikonyms, it is important, on the one hand, to discuss their derivational features and determine their localization, and, on the other hand, to clarify the etymological issues of such names. It is also actual to interpret the names of the current settlements on the territory of Dido and establish their genesis, as most of them are ancient.

Dido is located in the extreme highlands of Dagestan - in the valleys of the Mitluda water and its tributaries. It is located on the northern slopes of the main watershed of the Caucasus and covers a fairly wide area from the Kadori range to the north to Sahada, and from Kidiro to the village of Kimiatli in the west. Leonti Mroveli names the Dido people when describing the events of the 2nd century BC, while Dido is mentioned in Roman and Greek sources as early as the I-II centuries AD. Currently, up to 48 villages are located on the land and water inhabited by Dido people, in Tsunta and Tsumada districts, whose names can be both common (Avar, Dido) and different (A. Avar, B. Dido)¹. In Daghestan toponymy, the Dido oikonyms received little attention, thus prompting us to conduct their linguistic analysis. It is true that some papers refer to Dido oikonyms, but as far as we know, their linguistic research has not been carried out (cf. Serzhputovskiy 1916: 279; Bokarev 1949: 31; Megrelidze 1955: 241-242; Imnaishvili 1963: 7-8; Khalilov 1999: 842; Luguev, Mahomedov 2000: 7-50 ...).

Principal part

From the Dido oikonyms, some have Avar etymology, and some are designed according to the word derivation of the Dido language. Avar-shaped oikonyms are those forms that appear to have a proper root of Avar origin and suffixes of the same order, e.g.: **kil'ar-ṭa** < **ki-l'ar-ṭa** (<**ki-** 'two', cf. **ki-go** 'id.', **-l'ar** 'a stream', **-ṭa** 'on, onto') literally 'On two streams', **kidero** // **kidiro** < **kwidero** // ***kwi-diro** (cf. Avar **kwine** 'to eat') 'with a food, with a crop' ...; b) Oikonyms of Dido origin: **elboq** < **elbo-q** (cf. did. **elbo** 'a dove', **-q** < **-qaw** 'like, as') literally 'like a dove', **guṭaλ** < **guṭ-'aλ** (cf. did. **guṭ** 'smoke, dust', **'aλ** 'a village') literally 'a smoky village', etc.

In addition to the above-mentioned oikonyms, one or two village names are confirmed, which may be of Georgian origin. In particular, the name of the nearby village of Tusheti **qušat//qušet**, in which the suffix **-et/-at** producing ethnic names and toponyms can be distinguished separately. The folklore material we have about this village informs us that it was founded by someone named **quši**. If these narrations reflect the truth, then the purpose of the **-et** suffix would be clear - **quš-et** ‘descendants of Khushi’ (cf. tush. **biyo-et satibej** ‘mower of Bighoidze’...). The structural model of the Georgian language is followed by the general name **ilanxevi** of the villages included in the Shaitli Council, which should have a composite structure: **ilan-xevi** (< **ilaan-xevi** < **ilaant-xevi** < **iliaant-xevi** ‘khevi of Ilias’). Formed with the Georgian **-ur** suffix, it can be the name of one of the villages, **kiṭ-ur-i** (cf. did. **kiṭa**), which is united in the group of Ilankhevi villages, and so on.

Structurally, the Dido oikonyms are divided into two groups: 1) simple and 2) complex. 1) Simple oikonyms, as a rule, are forms of locative approaches: a) superassive **-ṭo** ‘on’ (I series): **ceṭo** < ce-**ṭo** (cf. did. **ce/cej** ‘a eagle’, **-ṭo** ‘on’, ‘over’) ‘over eagle’...; b) directive **-qo/-q** ‘onto, to’ (II series): **asaq** < as-a-**qo** (cf. did. **as** ‘a sky’, **-qo** ‘onto, to’) literally ‘to the sky’...; d) inessive II **-ḷ** ‘in’ (in full) (VI series): **kimeḷ** < kime-**ḷ** (cf. did. **kimu** ‘a sprout’, **-ḷ** ‘in’) literally ‘in the sprout’...; e) subesive II **-ḷ** ‘under’ (VII series): **geniḷ** < geni-**ḷ** (cf. did. **geni** ‘a pear’, **-ḷ** ‘under’) literally ‘under a pear’, etc.

In addition to the above-mentioned oikonyms, the names of some villages can be explained as follows: **quḷula** (‘the village located at the confluence of two rivers in the direction of the Khadori pass’), which is located near Khertisi, and in Russian **Междуречье** (**middle water**, cf. geo. **çqaltašua** ‘village in Baghdati district’) is represented in the form, it appears to be formed with the **-la** suffix. In our opinion, this name must be in some relation with the name **quḷala** > **quḷula** (‘branched’) (cf. **quḷu** ‘a double pitchfork’), which, in turn, can mean ‘two, pair’ (**q’a-no**) to be connected. This kind of interpretation is supported by the corresponding Avar version, with which the parallelism is striking: Avar **kiḷar-ta** < **ki-ḷar-ta** (< **ki** ‘two’, cf. **ki-go** ‘id.’, **-ḷar** ‘stream, gully’, **-ta** ‘-on’) literally ‘on two rivers, on two banks’.

2) Complex oikonyms are attributive composites, the defining component of which can be found in the absolutive, dative and possessive, and in the form of the defined **aḷ** (< **’aḷ** ‘a village’) is represented by the absolutive, e. g.: **naḥuraḷ** < ***naḥu-r-aḷ** (cf. did. **naḥu** ‘a oak’, **naḥu-r** [dative], **-aḷ** < **’aḷ** ‘a village’) literally ‘a village with oak trees’, **maqalaḷ** < **maqaraḷ** < ***maqar-r-aḷ** (cf. did. **maqar** ‘a barley’, **maqar-r** [dative], **-aḷ** < **’aḷ** ‘a village’) ‘a village with barley’, etc.

Conclusion

Thus, Didoian oikonyms are formed from the simple stems of various substantives (animals, birds, plants, astronomical names...) by adding markers of locative cases. In addition, such Didoian oikonyms are confirmed, which seem to have a composite structure and belong to the number of complex oikonyms. Oikonyms of composite structure put any noun as the first component in the absolutive, dative, and possessive cases, and as the second component they attach the name **aḷ** < **’aḷ** (‘a village’) in the absolutive case and in a simplified form.