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PHILOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Alambayeva G. B., Hudaiberdina G. B. Teaching listening comprehension skills.....	67
Bashorat J. S. Poetical treatment of conception of time.....	70
Bekalayeva A. O., Tleugabylova Z. A., Eshtaeva N. A. Interjections in English and Russian.....	73
Nyyazbekova K. S., Raimbekova M. A., Moldagalieva Zh. T. Teaching students for research work.....	78
Sapayeva G. E. Some aspects of the use of technology for foreign listeners.....	80
Madieva G. B., Medetbekova P. T., Boribaeva G. A. Almaty – Vernyi (Faithful) – Alma-Ata – Almaty: The history of renaming the city and its etymology.....	83

PSYCHOLOGY

Дауткалпева П. Б. Экспериментальное изучение особенностей профессиональной мотивации студентов педагогических специальностей.....	86
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ALMATY – VERNYI (FAITHFUL) – ALMA-ATA – ALMATY: THE HISTORY OF RENAMING THE CITY AND ITS ETYMOLOGY

The article deals with the origin history and renaming the Almaty toponymy (the city in the Kazakhstan Republic). All scientific etymologies of the Almaty city are given.

A green city, the south capital of Kazakhstan, a megalopolis, an administrative, economic and cultural center of the republic – Almaty that is surrounded by the Tien Shan fur-trees, the mountains of the Zailiyskiy Alatau that impersonates bright and inimitable nature beauty of the Semirechye and all Kazakhstan.

The history of beginnings of this nice city is defined not only by its location but also by its name that has changed many times. The official history of the city Almaty began in 1854. That year on the river Malaya Almatink the Zailiyskiy military bastion was built and then the city Vernyi. This name was given to the city in 1967.

But according to the archeologists' data and the excavate results the city's history approximately began in the period of the VIII-XI cc., when it was the place of the international trade where the Great Silk Route ran through. The city population was constituted by the Indo-European tribes that professed Buddhism and later Christianity. In the books of Zakhir ad-din Muhammad Babur «Babur-name» and Myrza Muhammad Haidar «Tarihi-and Rashidi» one can come across the name of the place as *Almatu*. During the Middle Ages' period (approximately the XII—XIII cc.) *Almatu* became a big city of the Semirechye [1].

The name *Almaty* in 1853 before building the military bastion one could find in the diary of the major M.D. Peremyshlkiy who was given the task to find in the area of the river Ili a convenient site to build the bastion [2]. That bastion from 1854 was called Zailiyskiy and then the city Vernyi (Faithful).

The city was called Vernyi till 1921 and then in 1921 by the act of the TurkGEC was renamed into *Alma-Ata*. But according to some data the suggestion of renaming the city was done on 3, February of the same year.

3, February 1921 the name *Almaty* was approved but because of the unknown reasons on 5, February it was renamed again into *Alma-Ata* [3].

The known scientists in the linguistics and geography were against the name «Alma-Ata». In numerous publications the specialists pointed to the mistake that it was impossible of this word combination from the point of view of the Kazakh language. But that name was changed only in 1993.

The toponymy etymology of *Almaty/Almatu* is very interesting in its formation. The scientists G.K. Konkashpaev and A. Abdrakhmanov define this name as «a place where many apple trees grow». «Alma-ty»: *alma* – an apple, *ty* – is an ending the meaning of which is debating. The ancient form of the ending «*ty*» was treated as a word-forming suffix of the adjective by adding *-ty* to a noun (for example, *Alma (apple)-ty*, *Olen (kind of meadow plants)-ty*, *Rgai (bush, cotoneaster)-ty*). But from the point of the Kazakh grammar such phenomena are not possible. The right variant is represented in a different way: *Almaly*, *Olentdy*, *Rgaily*. And the ending *-ty* is added to the stems that are ended with the voiceless consonants. For example: *tas (a stone) – tasty*, *kurak (a reed) – kurakty* [4, 5].

The famous scientist E. Koichubaev in his works has pointed out that *-ty* is not a world-building suffix but the variant of the Kazakh geographic term *tau (a mountain)*. For example: *Almaty – an apple mount*, *Olentdy – a meadow mount*, *Rgaily – a cotoneaster mount*, *karagaily – a pine-tree mount*, *Buguty – a deer mount, etc.* G.K. Konkashpaev has studied all mentioned toponyms says that *Almaty* is a name of two rivers – *Malaya (Small)* and *Bolshaya (Big)* *almatinka* that cross this locality. By analogy there are rivers in the West Kazakhstan that are called *Olentdy* and *Shiderty* the same names have two rivers in the North Kazakhstan. Mentioned by E. Koichubaev toponyms do not have uplands and mountains with the analogical names [4]. In G.K. Konkashpaev's opinion to call rivers with the mountains names are absurd. T. Zhanuzak taking into account the variation *Almaty/Almatu* thinks that the meaning *tau (a mountain)* of the formants *ty/tu* needs specification and thorough study [5, 38].

The names of the city *Almaty* are considered not only from the scientific point but also from the folk etymology point of view. «A mass language phenomenon that is included in the ambiguous for the local population geographic names on the base of the sense associations that appear because of the sound resemblance between the words and the accompanying phonetics change of the word and its morphology is called *folk or false etymology*. Such an explanation is done without taking into consideration all historic and geographic conditions and linguistics rules. It leads to the full review of the toponym. It is possible to say that the folk etymology can be given as an example of the folk toponymy creation» [6].

According to T. Zhanuzak the name of the city *Alma-Ata* is not a Russian variant of the Kazakh *Almaty* but it represents its own name [5, 38]. That is the name of the city has an eponym character. Eponyms (old Greek ἐπώνυμος – literary who has given the name, Lat. *heros eponimus*) – god, a real or legendary man or hero after whom some geographic object, people, tribe or a time period was named [7]. T. Zhanuzak refers to the writings of the historic figure of the XVIII century Shapyrashty Kazybek bek Tauasaruly. In his book «Түп-түркіянан өзіме шейін» he mentions the man Alma by name (Alma ata) who cured people with the mixture of different herbs and t water of the Arasan sources. To T. Zhanuzak's mind the environs where the famous healer lived was called after him «Almaarasan». The scientist has an opinion that in the name Alma there is an indication that the man was very old (ata from the Kazakh – a grandfather). When in 1921 the city Vernyi was renamed into Alma-Ata, according to T. Zhanuzak this historic fact was taken into account.

The book Tauasaruly Kazybek is scientific and historical heritage and also the source of the interpretation of some toponymy names of the Semirechye.

Thus, considering the name of the city Almaty as an eponym needs a thorough and complex researching of linguists, historians and geographers.

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