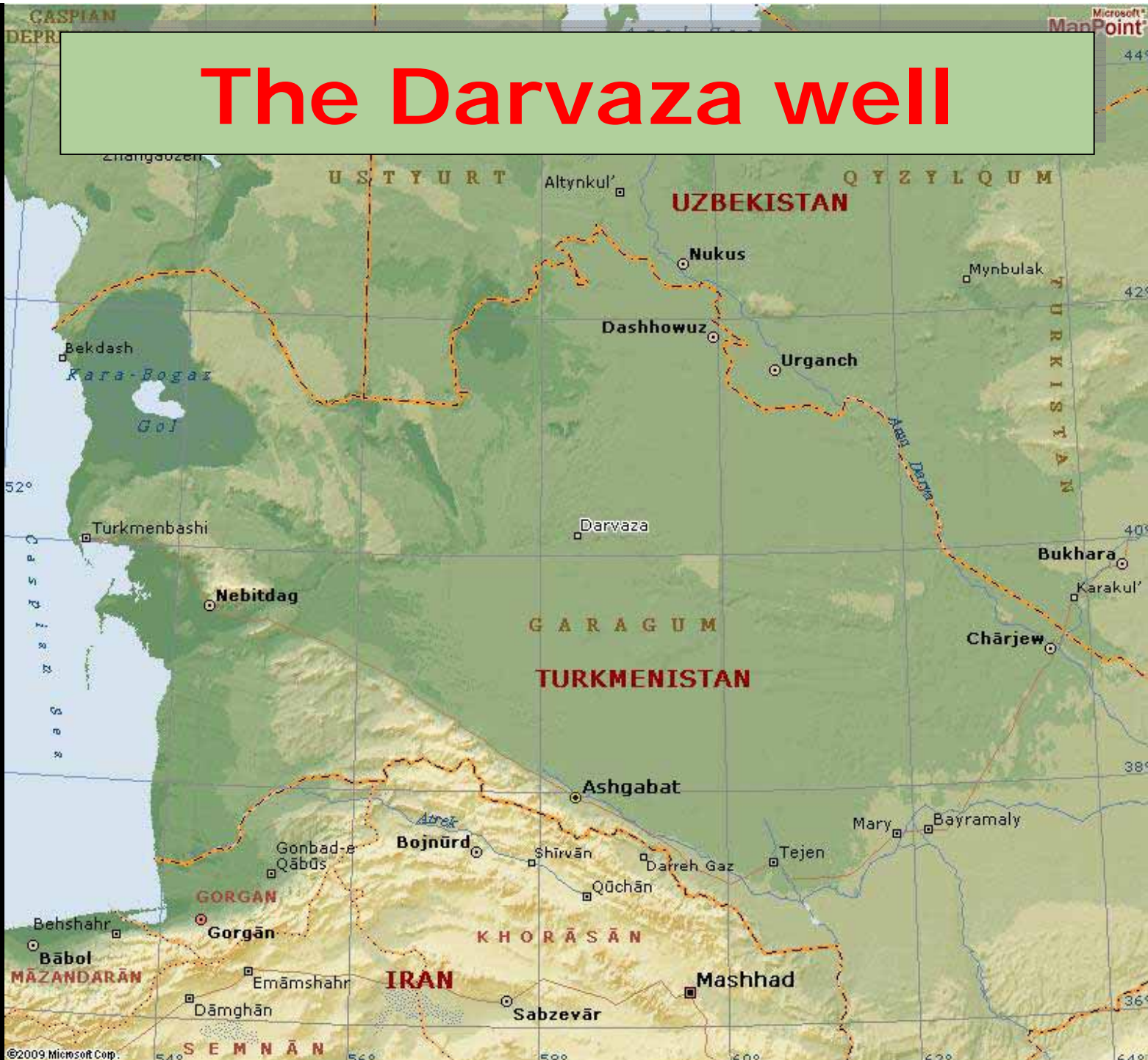


The Darvaza well





In the middle of the Karakoum (Turkmenistan) desert, close to the disappeared village called Darvaza, there is a crater of about one hundred meters of diameter and more than twenty meters of depth, called "the hell's door".



Inside this well, a fire has been burning for dozens of years, a fire that looks endless.



The Darvaza well is not a work of nature, but the result of an unfortunate soviet mining prospection started in the 50's.



In 1971, a drilling provoked the collapse of an underground cavity, so revealing a gaping hole leaking enormous quantities of gas.



The geologists decided to torch the well
to eliminate such toxic gas,



The soviets grossly underestimated the dimensions of the cavity:
the gas that should have burned out within a few weeks has actually kept
burning without interruption since 1971!

It is unknown for how long “the « hell’s door » will keep on burning. Even though the well of Darvaza is located in a region difficult to access, a lot of people gather there to observe this fascinating phenomenon.





The intense heat coming from the crater allows to approach the place only for a few minutes because of the unbearable temperature.

At night the show is Dantean: the fire burns in all its magnificence, giving the well the look of a volcanic burning crater.





THE END