V.A. Chirikba.

Abaza Personal names.

1. Abaza personal names: general features.
Abazas are a small indigenous Caucasian people living in the Karačaj-Čerkes Republic of the Russian Federation, which is situated on the western part of the Northern Caucasus. The closest linguistic kin of Abaza are Abkhaz (both are often regarded as dialects of one language), Kabardian, Adyghe (the latter called together Circassian and also representing close dialects) and the recently extinct Ubykh. These languages form the small West Caucasian family, which is related to the East Caucasian (or Nakh-Daghestanian) linguistic family; the West and East Caucasian branches form the North Caucasian linguistic family, which is not related genetically to the other indigenous Caucasian family, Kartvelian.

The number of Abazas, according to the All-Russia population census of 2002, is 37,942. Besides, many thousands of Abazas live in the Diaspora (mostly in Turkey, but also in some Middle Eastern countries, like Syria and Jordan), where their ancestors had to flee the Russian-Caucasian war in the middle of the 19th century. The Abazas are Sunni Muslim.


Traditionally, Abazas used a two-name system, consisting, as a rule, of the surname (цзээ, lit. ‘house-name’) plus the postposed first name (ээ), e.g. Thaçээ Bemээра, Arра Kaçээ, Erээ Umar, Qаrdээ Mухадиин. Some people, beside their official first name, have several other given names, up to five or even six (cf. Ionova & Tataršão 2000: 155). Typically, different names are used by different circles of peoples surrounding a person: family, friends, work, etc.

A new three-name system was introduced by the Russian administration in the middle of the 19th century, but, unlike the Russian model (“first name + patronymic (= father’s name) + surname”), in Abaza the traditional preposition of the surname was retained. This model is “surname + patronymic (= X his-son) + first name”, e.g. Азээба Hээд jра Nazиir “Adzynba Hud his-son Nazir”, Таээ Bатах jра Vladimir “Tygu Batah his-son Vladimir”, Alматээра Шамсээdin jра Kaээфи “Aмматырыгга Shamsatin his-son Kiasээф”. When citing foreign names (Russian or not) built on the Russian model, either the hybrid models are used, such as “surname + first name + patronymic (= X his-son)”, as in Чикова Семён Аромэл’d Stepan jра “Chikobava Arnold’d Stepan his-son” (cf. Russ Арлом’д Степановић Чикобава), or the name is borrowed in its original form, e.g. Алексей Максимович Горкий. The Abaza model “first name + patronymic” was inverted in Abaza into “patronymic + first name”, e.g. Гамид jра Мухамед ‘Hamid’s son Muhammad’, which would correspond to Russ Мухамед Xамидовић; but in cases of Russian names, they are used as they are, e.g. Игор Андреевич. Yet, the traditional model “surname + first name” (void of the patronymic) remains the predominant model both in the unofficial and official Abaza-language discourse.

The Russian patronymic suffixes -овић (masc., e.g. Ивановић, ‘son of Ivan’) and -овна (fem., e.g. Ивановна ‘daughter of Ivan’) have as their equivalents in Abaza -jра ‘his
son’ (e.g. Ivan jpa ‘Ivan’s son’) or -jpha’ ‘his daughter’ (e.g. Ivan jpha ‘Ivan’s daughter’). This system is used now, in accordance with the Russian practice, in official situations: all three names are used when referring to a person, and two names, i.e. first name plus patronymic, when addressing a person.

The inheritance of surnames is patrilineal, from fathers to children. Traditionally, the daughter-in-law was strictly forbidden to call her husband and his closest older relatives by their first names. That is why the children are given first names not coinciding with names of the older members of the family, or of the ancestors, in order to avoid using them by the children’s mother.

Traditionally, even young people can address the older people by their first names. Only lately, under the Russian influence, in official situations name+patronymic name are used. In vocative forms a special suffix -a can be used with names ending in a consonant to express endearment (mostly when addressing a child), e.g. Zurab-a ‘(dear) Zurab!’. Diminutive forms of names can be formed by adding the adjective əkʷən ‘small, little’, e.g. Zurab əkʷən ‘little Zurab’.

Children are often given pet names, based on traditional pet names, as well as on occasional or onomatopoetic words, which are used by the close family circle and friends, in some cases throughout the whole life of a person.

Some first names can be used both as masculine and feminine, e.g. Ganda, K’na, K’ata, K’ont’a, K’wet’a, K’wala, Nuri, P’at’aš, Cuna, Cuca (cf. Ekba 1989: 343).

2. First names.
All given names can be divided into two groups according to their origin: native and borrowed. Structurally, native names can be simple (Aša, God, Razna), compound (La-qʷəz ‘big-eyed’, Xi-qpsj ‘gold’), derived (Gʷə-a, from gʷə ‘heart’ and diminutive suffix -na, Kʷajc-w-a-t[ka], from Kʷajc-w-a ‘black’ and suffix -ra), or complex (La-gʷə-y-la ‘eye-heart/centre-CAUS-joy’). Many names represent reduplications, such as male names yʷ-a-yʷa, Xa-ya, Xa-xa, Xʷa-xʷa; female names: Gʷa-gʷa, Kʷə-kʷə, Tʷa-ta, Ca-ca, Șa-șa. Among simple names there are also historically complex or derived ones, but now unanalyzable.

Names can be based on the designations of animals, birds, plants (see the examples below), metals (Xʷapsj (fem.) ‘gold’, Razna (fem.) ‘silver’, Șor ‘steel’), on epithets (Gʷə-yə (fem.) ‘hope’, La-qʷəz ‘big-eyed’, Qʷpsj ‘red’, Qʷaqjə ‘flat’, Șkʷokʷa (fem.) ‘white’, Zaga ‘sluggish’), etc. The following are some typical traditional native names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kʷ的态度</td>
<td>‘short’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kʷəpsj</td>
<td>‘pointed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xa-xa</td>
<td>‘light’, ‘light-headed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Șʷarax</td>
<td>‘deer’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dada</td>
<td>cf. dad(a) ‘father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>‘hornless’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aša</td>
<td>‘hare’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaya</td>
<td>‘broad, wide’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kʷajc-wa</td>
<td>‘black’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Razna</td>
<td>‘silver’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tʷa-ta</td>
<td>‘soft, mild’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dara</td>
<td>‘strong’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 I mark the morphemic divisions by a dot.
2.1. Borrowed names.

The borrowed first names belong to the following major groups according to their origin:
1. Oriental (Turkish, Arabic, Jewish, Persian); 2. Circassian (mostly Kabardian); 3. Kartvelian (Megrelian, Georgian); 4. Russian; 5. Other.

The majority of “oriental” first names, which can also be generally labelled as “Muslim” or “Islamic” names, irrespective of their Turkic, Arabic, Persian or Jewish origin, started being used by Abazas with the spread of Islam, which has become a dominant religion since the late 18th century. A certain part of these names came via neighbouring Circassians, which can be judged from their phonetic traits (e.g., the palatalized l, absent in native Abaza words and rendering Cirevoiced lateral fricative l). Some of the Circassian names borrowed into Abaza retain their proto-Kabardian or even Common Circassian pronunciation. By their origin, the Turkic names are both Anatolian (i.e. Turkish) and Kipchak Turkic (i.e. Crimean Tatar, Noghay or Karachay-Balkar). Chronologically, the Russian names in Abaza belong to the latest period.


2.1.5. Circassian names.

2.1.5.1. Masc.: Adamej < Ad Adamey ‘name of an Ad tribe’, Fāc’a < Kab Fəçe ‘black’, Beda < Kab Boda ‘strong’, Dax’wa < Kab Dağ’wa ‘deaf’, Pasa bəda < Kab Psa-bəde ‘soul-strong’, .'.$əba < Kab 1aLe ‘weak, relaxed’, Naxw’a < Kab Na-xw’e ‘grey-eyed’, Ŝág’wa < Kab Šag’e ‘blunt’, Ŝor < Kab Šor ‘steel’, etc.

2.1.6. Kartvelian names: Anzor < Geo aznaur-i ‘born free’ (of Persian origin with the Geo suffix -ur-i), Bayar < Megr bayiri ‘sparrow’, Dačja (fem.) < Megr or Geo ʒač′-i ‘chain (mail)’.

2.1.7. Russian names started being used since the incorporation of the Northern Caucasus into Russia in the middle of the 19th century and became especially popular during the Soviet period. All earlier borrowed Russian names reflect their oral adaptation as perceived by Abazas. Many Russian names which are short forms of ‘full’ names were used until recently as independent names, cf. fem.: Lida (full form Lidija), Liuba (for Liubov’), Marusia (for Manja), Raja (for Raisa), Zina (for Zinaida), Šura (for Aleksandra), etc.; masc.: Alik (for Aleksandr), Gena (for Gennadij), Miša (for Dmitrij), Miša (for Mixail), Volda (for Vladiimir).

There were also some occasional Russian words used as names, cf. Carica (fem.) < Russ carica ‘queen’, Cacarka (fem.) < Russ cesarka ‘guinea hen’, Čorna < Russ čornyj ‘black’, K’njaz’-bi < Russ knjaz’ ‘prince’ + bi < Turkic bez ‘chieftain, ruler, prince’, K’vrica (fem.) < Russ kariča ‘hen’, K’wornos < Russ kurnos(y) ‘snub-nosed’, K’wok’la (fem.) < Russ kakla ‘doll’. Besides, the Abazas used the Russian diminutive suffix -k(a) (rendered as -k’a) to add to non-Russian names, cf. Abdul-k’a (from Abdul), Cac-k’a (from Caca), Fat-k’a (fem.; from Fatima), Mamet-k’a (from Mamet), etc.

Presently, the Russian names usage mostly does not deviate much from their usage by the Russians themselves, with short forms being used in unofficial discourse and full forms used in official discourse and in documentation.


2.3. Borrowed formants are attached mostly to foreign names: -at in fem. names < Arab fem. suffix -at: Abidat, Aminat, Ajfat, Fatimat, Xažat, etc.; -bak in Turkic bez ‘master, leader’: Aslam-bak, Bator-bak, Morda-bak, Qaš-bak, Šam-bak, etc.; -bi in Turk bez ‘master, chieftain, ruler, prince’: Ara-bi, Arut-bi, Askar-bi, Batal-bi, Bator-bi, Muhr-bi, Nur-bi, etc.; -qari < Crimean Tatar qirij (of Mongol or Greek origin), postposed to the names belonging to the dynasty of the Crimean rulers: Aslan-qari, Ayqraz-qari, Dolat-qari, Qaš-qari, Q’rom-qari, Xan-qari; haš’ < Tur hacî ‘Hadji, a Muslim who made a pilgrimage to Mecca’: Haš-Bakar, Haš-Mura, Haš-Musa, Haš’-Umar, -morda < Tur mirza ‘prince, gentleman’ < Pers: Alı-morda, Asla[ŋ]-morda, BAK-morda, Duał-morda; q’an < Kab q’an ‘foster child, boy from aristocratic family raised by a lower status family’ < Turkic qan ‘blood’: Bak-q’an, P̟-q’an, Temor-q’an, etc.; -xan < Tur han ‘ruler, khan’: fem.: Ajd-xan, Amor-xan, Aslan-xan, Askör-xan, Nur-xan, Zur-xan, Gwaš-xan; masc.: Alim-xan, Q’rom-xan, Zafum-xan.

Etymologically, surnames can be based on personal (patronymic) names, ethnic terms, native or borrowed words. There are differences in surnames as used by Tapanta and Ashkhyarya Abazas. The Tapanta Abazas’ surnames mainly lack any surnames suffixes or formants similar to Abx -ba: Ar, Ajsan, Daqwa, K’adahxwa, K’waj, Meretqewal, Qsal, Q’ardan, Q’apsorgan, Sowgin, Tobol, Sardis, etc. In plural, the human collective plural suffix -r’ia is used: Apsa-r’ia ‘the Apsa family clan’, Ar(ə)-r’ia, Bicard-r’ia, G’aghə-r’ia. Some Tapanta names contain the Kabardian surnames suffix -q’wa ‘son’, cf. Ce-q’wa, Ganso-q’wa, Harato-q’wa, Haçwe-q’wa, etc.

In the Ashkhyarya dialect, many surnames are formally and etymologically close or identical to Abkhaz surnames and often have the same typical formant -ba (derived from jə-pa ‘his son’), e.g. Aqar-ba, Ay-ba, Ađi-ba, Bay-ba, G’om-ba, Mačə-ba, 3ə-ba. This is explained by the relatively late migration (probably, in the early 17th century) of the speakers of Ashkhyarya (lit. ‘mountaineers’) from the Abkhazian mountains to the North Caucasian planes. In certain cases the patronymic element -jpa is preserved in its original form, cf. such surnames as Naj-łjja, Əlad-jpa. Other Ashkhyarya surnames are used without a suffix: Dajwa, K’agwa, Ləs, Peshwa, Tanas. In plural, Ashkhyarya surnames are marked by the human plural suffix -ų/-łia (e.g. Ələŋ-ą, G’um-ą, Zorom-ą, K’awal-ı), or -r’ia (Ax-r’ia, Bzaghə-r’ia, Ėbəj-r’ia, Əlad-r’ia), sometimes with the preservation of the formant -ba (e.g. Aşa-b[a]-ą). The collective forms of surnames can also be formed by the suffix -za, e.g. K’ol-za, Lij-za, Q’om-za, in plural -gə-ą (e.g. Lij-ą, Łą).

In official documents and registries which are in Russian, the Abaza surnames are recorded mainly with the Russian surnames suffix -ov (masc./-ova (fem.), cf. Adzhevan (for Aqan-ba), Ađiğ (for Ađi-ba), Kardanov (for Q’ardan), Kużev (for K’waj), Lajšev (for Lajšə), Loov (for Law), Tugov (for T’agə), etc. The Ashkhyarya surnames, on the contrary, are often recorded in Russian with the original formant -ba, e.g. Agba (for Ay-ba), Ašba (for Ašə-ba), Axba (for Ax-ba), Dzyba (for 3ə-ba), Kiba (for K’ol-ba), Kocba (for K’wag-ba).

Some big families had their patronymic subdivisions, called tə-wəm (~ Pers), or more rarely ab.an.para (lit. ‘father-mother-son-ABSTR; cf. Abx abaj.para), based on the name of a common ancestor; e.g. the patronymic name Əlad-r’ia ‘the Əlad’s’) / Əlad-japəćə ‘the Əlad’s-son’ represents a branching of the family clan Əlaç-ə, the aristocratic families Zawəm and Sid were regarded as patronymic offshoots of the Abx clan MarŞlan, etc.

3.1. Social status of surnames. Within the past feudal system, certain surnames used to belong to highest aristocracy (aša ‘prince’), others – to nobles (a-əməsta-daw ‘big aristocrat’ and a-əməsta/ Tamsta ‘aristocrat’), peasants (nxalə) and lower status social groups (ləg ‘slave’, ɬənalə ‘house slave’). Even the names of the major Abaza groups/tribes, as well as of local communities or villages, were based on the names of the ruling families. The six main Tapanta groups were ruled by six princely family clans: Bajbard, Darqwa, K’jaws, Law (related to Abx princely clan Ađba), Q’al, Šantajmon. The Tapanta noble families had such surnames as Ajsan, Jaš, Lajshə, Sarmat, Tram, Lij, Šandar, Šljow, etc. The Ashkhyarya groups were ruled by such aristocrat family clans as Anba-
qʷa (related to Abx princiely clan Aḍ⁻ba), Egboqʷa/Geboqʷa, Etləxʷ, Glargla, Kʷuḏ, Sid (offshoot of the Abx clan Maršan), Tam, Tanaš, Zawrem (offshoot of the Maršans), etc.

Abbreviations.
Abx Abkhazian
ABSTR abstract suffix
Ad Adyghey
Arab Arabic
Circ Circassian
fem. feminine
Geo Georgian
Kab Kabardian
masc. masculine
Megr Megrelian
Pers Persian
Russ Russian
Tur Turkish

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