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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, Adyghey (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.

The collection of Abaza first names was published in Ekba (1989). The names were analyzed by Ionova (1988), Temirova (1986) and Ionova & Tataršao (2000). The Abaza surnames are discussed in Txajeuxov (1989) and Ionova & Tataršao (2000).

Traditionally, Abazas used a two-name system, consisting, as a rule, of the surname (*tʒə.x'əz*, lit. 'house-name') plus the postposed first name (*x'əz*), e.g. *Thajc'əx' Bemərza*, *Arrša K'əšək'*, *Erəž' Umar*, *Q'ardan Muhadin*. Some people, beside their official first name, have several other given names, up to five or even six (cf. Ionova & Tataršao 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, to produce the model "surname + patronymic (= X his-son) + first name", e.g. *Ažənbə H'əd jpa Nazir* "Adzynba Hud his-son Nazir", *T'əg' Batah jpa Vladimir* "Tygu Batah his-son Vladimir", *Ahmatərša Šamsadin jpa Kiašif* "Ahmatyrgha Shamsadin his-son Kiašif". 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 *Čikobava Arnold Stepan jpa* "Čikobava Arnold Stepan his-son" (cf. Russ *Arnol'd Stepanovič Čikobava*), or the name is borrowed in its original form, e.g. *Aleksej Maksimovič Gor'kij*. The shorter Russian model "first name + patronymic" was inverted in Abaza into "patronymic + first name", e.g. *Hamid jpa Muhamad* 'Hamid's son Muhamad', which would correspond to Russ *Muxamad Xamidovič*; but in case of Russian names, they are used as they are, e.g. *Pjotr Andreevič*. 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 *-ovič* (masc., e.g. *Ivan-ovič*, 'son of Ivan') and *-ovna* (fem., e.g. *Ivan-ovna* 'daughter of Ivan') have as their equivalents in Abaza *-j.pa* 'his

son' (e.g. *Ivan jpa* 'Ivan's son') or *-j.pha*¹ '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 of the adjective *škʷən* 'small, little', e.g. *Zurab škʷən* 'little Zurab'

Children are often given pet names, based on traditional pet names, as well as on occasional or onomatopoeic 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. *Gənda*, *K'əna*, *K'əta*, *K'ənt'a*, *K'wət'a*, *K'wəla*, *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 (*Až'a*, *Gəd*, *Razna*), compound (*La-qʷaz* 'big-eyed', *X'apš'i* 'gold'), derived (*Gʷə-na*, from *gʷə* 'heart' and diminutive suffix *-na*, *Kʷajč'wa-r[ʷa]*, from *kʷajč'wa* 'black' and suffix *-ra*), or complex (*La-gʷə-r-γ'a* 'eye-heart/centre-CAUS-joy'). Many names represent reduplications, such as male names *γʷa-γʷa*, *l'a-l'a*, *Xa-xa*, *Xʷa-xʷa*; female names: *Gʷa-gʷa*, *Kʷa-kʷa*, *T'a-t'a*, *Ca-ca*, *š'a-š'a*. 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 (*X'apš'i* (fem.) 'gold', *Razna* (fem.) 'silver', *žər* 'steel'), on epithets (*Gʷəya* (fem.) 'hope', *La-qʷaz* 'big-eyed', *Q'apš'ə* 'red', *Q'əq'ə* 'flat', *škʷək'wa* (fem.) 'white', *Zaza* 'sluggish'), etc. The following are some typical traditional native names.

Masculine		Feminine	
Name	Meaning	Name	Meaning
<i>K'əč'</i>	'short'	<i>Až'a</i>	'hare'
<i>K'əš'w</i>	'pointed'	<i>yaya</i>	'broad, wide'
<i>Xaxa</i>	'light', 'light-headed'	<i>Kʷajč'wa</i>	'black'
<i>š'arax</i>	'deer'	<i>Razna</i>	'silver'
<i>Dadu</i>	cf. <i>dad(a)</i> 'father'	<i>T'at'a</i>	'soft, mild'
<i>Gəd</i>	'hornless'	<i>Dara</i>	'strong'

¹I 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 *ʃ*, absent in native Abaza words and rendering Circ voiced 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.

2.1.1. Turkic: *Ajdamər* < *Ay-demir* (*ay* ‘moon’, *demir* ‘iron’, ‘iron moon’), *Aslan* < *arслан* ‘lion’ (> ‘hero’), *Askər* < *asker* ‘soldier; army’, *Bak* < *bek* ‘master, leader’, *Kʷəʃəkʷ* < *küçük* ‘small, little; young; child’, *Temər-q’an* < < *temir* ‘iron’, *qan* ‘blood’, *Šalduz* (fem.) < ‘star’, etc.

2.1.2. Arabic: *Abduʃah* < ‘Abdullah ‘servant of God’, *Amina* (fem.) < *Amīnā* ‘being safe, confident’ (the Prophet’s mother’s name), *Anwar* < *Anwar* ‘brighter’, *Ašad* < *As‘ad* ‘luckier’, *Azamat* < *Azamat* ‘greatness’, *Aziz* < ‘Azīz ‘dear, precious’, *ʃumar//Umar* < ‘umar ‘populous, flourishing’, *Farida* (fem.) < *Farīda* ‘unique, precious’, *Karim* < *Karīm* ‘noble, generous’, *Mašid* < *Māšid* ‘glorious’, *Murat* < *Murād* ‘desired’, *Q’adər* < *Qādir* ‘powerful’, *Safid* < *Sa‘īd* ‘happy, lucky’, *Šum* < *Jum‘a* ‘Friday’.

2.1.3. Persian: *Fardawəs* (fem.) < *Firdous* (via Arab) ‘paradise’, *Mərza* < *Mirza* ‘prince’, *Rašid* < *Rašid* ‘one who has attained salvation’, *Šahəm* < *Šahin* ‘peregrine falcon’, *Zurab* (via Geo) < *Sohrab* ‘illustrious’, etc.

2.1.4. Jewish (via Arab): *Ajsa//ʃajsə* < *yehōšū‘a* ‘Jesus’ (‘god will save’), *Ajub* < *ʔyyōbh* ‘persecuted’, *Bərham* < ‘Ab-rāhām ‘father of many (peoples)’, *Dawat* < *Dāwīd* ‘beloved’, *Musa* < *Moše* ‘Moses’, *Salman* < *Šelomoh* ‘peaceful’, *Šusəp//Usəf* < *Yōsēf* ‘he (god) will multiply’, etc.

2.1.5. Circassian names:

2.1.5.1. Masc.: *Adamej* < *Ad Adamej* ‘name of an Ad tribe’, *Fəc‘a* < *Kab Fəc‘e* ‘black’, *Bəda* < *Kab Bəde* ‘strong’, *Dagʷa* < *Kab Dagʷe* ‘deaf’, *Psabəda* < *Kab Pse-bəde* ‘soul-strong’, *Laʃa* < *Kab Laʃe* ‘weak, relaxed’, *Našxʷa* < *Kab Na-šxʷe* ‘grey-eyed’, *ʒagʷa* < *Kab ʒagʷe* ‘blunt’, *ʒər* < *Kab ʒər* ‘steel’, etc.

2.1.5.2. Fem.: *Dax(ʃ)a* < *Kab Daxe* ‘beautiful’, *Gʷašʃanašxʷa* < *Kab Gʷaše našxʷe* ‘lady grey-eyed’, *Gʷašc‘əkʷ* < *Kab Gʷašc‘əkʷ* ‘lady small’, *Naxdaxe* < *Kab Neχ daxe* ‘more beautiful’, *Nasafo* < *Kab Nəse fo* ‘honey bride’, *Nəsʔef* < *Kab Nəs-ʔef* ‘sweet bride’, *Q‘abze* < *Kab Q‘abze* ‘clean’, *Tlap‘a* < *Kab lap‘e* ‘dear, precious’, *Xʷəž(a)* < *Kab Xʷəž* ‘white’.

2.1.6. Kartvelian names: *Anzor* < Geo *azna.ur-i* ‘born free’ (of Persian origin with the Geo suffix *-ur-i*), *Bayər* < Meqr *bayiri* ‘sparrow’, *Dač’ja* (fem.) < Meqr or Geo *žáč’v-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 *Marija*), *Raja* (for *Raisa*), *Zina* (for *Zinaida*), *Šura* (for *Aleksandra*), etc.; masc.: *Alik* (for *Aleksandr*), *Gena* (for *Gennadij*), *Miša* (for *Dmitrij*), *Miša* (for *Mixail*), *Volod’a* (for *Vladimir*).

There were also some occasional Russian words used as names, cf. *Carica* (fem.) < Russ *carica* ‘queen’, *Cacark’a* (fem.) < Russ *cesarka* ‘guinea hen’, *Čorna* < Rus *čornyj* ‘black’, *K’njaz-bi* < Rus *knjaz* ‘prince’ + *bi* < Turkic *bej* ‘chieftain, ruler, prince’, *K’wrica* (fem.) < Russ *kurica* ‘hen’, *K’wərnos* < Rus *kurnos(yj)* ‘snub-nosed’, *K’wək’w’la* (fem.) < Russ *kukla* ‘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.

2.2. Typical native names’ formants: *-ca*: *K’wak’wə-ca* (fem.; cf. *K’wak’wa*), *K’wna-ca* (fem.; cf. *K’wəna*), *X’wə-ca* (fem.); *-la*: *K’wak’wə-la* (fem.; cf. *K’wak’wa*), *Zarə-la* (fem.; cf. *Zara*); *-na*: *Babə-na* (fem.), *Gzu-na* (fem.), *G’wag’wə-na* (fem.; cf. *G’wag’wa*), *G’wə-na* (fem.; cf. *g’wə* ‘heart’), *K’ani-na* (fem. and masc.; cf. *K’ana*), *K’wak’wə-na* (fem.; cf. *K’wak’wa*), *Nax’wə-na* (fem.; cf. *Nax’w*), *X’wax’wə-na* (fem.; cf. *X’wax’wa*), *Žazu-na* (fem. and masc.; cf. *Žazu*); *-ra*: *G’wə-ra* (fem.; cf. *g’wə* ‘heart’), *G’wra-ra* (fem.; cf. *G’wə-ra*, from *g’wə* ‘heart’), *K’at’ə-ra* (fem.; cf. *K’at’a*), *K’wajč’wə-r[*a]* (*k’wajč’wə* ‘black’), *K’wak’wə-ra* (fem.; cf. *K’wak’wa*), *X’wə-ra* (fem.).

2.3. Borrowed formants are attached mostly to foreign names: *-at* in fem. names < Arab fem. suffix *-at*: *Abidat*, *Aminat*, *Ajšat*, *Fatimat*, *Xaž’at*, etc.; *-bak’* < Turkic *bek* ‘master, leader’: *Aslam-bak’*, *Batər-bak’*, *Mərza-bak’*, *Q’ala-bak’*, *Žam-bak’*, etc.; *-bi* < Turk *bej* ‘master, chieftain, ruler, prince’: *Ara-bi*, *Arut-bi*, *Askər-bi*, *Batal-bi*, *Batər-bi*, *Muhar-bi*, *Nur-bi*, etc.; *-g’ari* < Crimean Tatar *girej* (of Mongol or Greek origin), postposed to the names belonging to the dynasty of the Crimean rulers: *Aslan-g’ari*, *Apxaz-g’ari*, *Dolat-g’ari*, *Q’ləč’-g’ari*, *Q’rəm-g’ari*, *Xan-g’ari*; *haž’-* < Tur *haci* ‘Hadji, a Muslim who made a pilgrimage to Mecca’: *Haž’-Bak’ər*, *Haž’-Murat*, *Haž’-Musa*, *Haž’-Umar*; *-mərza* < Tur *mirza* ‘prince; gentleman’ < Pers: *Ali-mərza*, *Asla[*n]-mərza*, *Bak’-mərza*, *Dulat-mərza*; *-q’an* < Kab *q’an* ‘foster child, boy from aristocratic family raised by a lower status family’ < Turkic *qan* ‘blood’: *Bak’-q’an*, *Pšj-q’an*, *Temər-q’an*, etc.; *-xan* < Tur *han* ‘ruler, khan’: fem.: *Ajd-xan*, *Amər-xan*, *Aslan-xan*, *Azk’ər-xan*, *Nur-xan*, *Zur-xan*, *G’wəšj-xan*; masc.: *Alim-xan*, *Q’rəm-xan*, *Zal’əm-xan*.

3. Surnames.

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 Ashkharywa Abazas. The Tapanta Abazas' surnames mainly lack any surnames suffixes or formants similar to Abx -ba: *Ar*, *Ajsan*, *Daq^wma*, *K^ɔʒmax^wa*, *K^wəʒ*, *Meremq^wəʃ*, *Qsal*, *Q'ardan*, *Q^wapsərg'an*, *Šowg'an*, *Tobəʃ*, *Š'ardis*, etc. In plural, the human collective plural suffix -r.ʃa is used: *Apsa-r.ʃa* 'the Apsa family clan', *Ar(ə)-r.ʃa*, *Bibard-r.ʃa*, *G^wag^wə-r.ʃa*. Some Tapanta names contain the Kabardian surnames suffix -q^wa 'son', cf. *Ce-q^wa*, *Ganšo-q^wa*, *Harato-q^wa*, *Hač^wə-q^wa*, etc.

In the Ashkharywa 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. *Agər-ba*, *Ay-ba*, *Ažəj-ba*, *Bay-ba*, *G^wəm-ba*, *Məč^ɔ-ba*, *ʒə-ba*. This is explained by the relatively late migration (probably, in the early 17th century) of the speakers of Ashkharywa (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 *Nəj-[^ɕj]-jpa*, *Š'ad-jpa*. Other Ashkharywa surnames are used without a suffix: *Dag^wa*, *K^ɔac^w*, *ʌəs*, *Psh^wə*, *Tanaš*. In plural, Ashkharywa surnames are marked by the human plural suffix -ā// -ʃa (e.g. *Aʃ^wz-ā*, *G^wan-ā*, *Zorəm-ā*, *K^wač^ɔ-ʃa*), or -r.ʃa (*Ax-r.ʃa*, *Bzag^wa-r.ʃa*, *Žəj-r.ʃa*, *Š'ad-r.ʃa*), sometimes with the preservation of the formant -ba (e.g. *Aša-b[a]-ā*). The collective forms of surnames can also be formed by the suffix -za, e.g. *K^ɔəl-za*, *Lij-za*, *Q^wəž-za*, in plural -z[a]-ā (e.g. *Lij-z.ā*).

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. *Adzinov* (for *Azən-ba*), *Adžiev* (for *A-žəj-ba*), *Kardanov* (for *Q'ardan*), *Kužev* (for *K^wəʒ*), *Lafišev* (for *Lač^wəš*), *Loov* (for *Law*), *Tugov* (for *T'əg^w*), etc. The Ashkharywa surnames, on the contrary, are often recorded in Russian with the original formant -ba, e.g. *Agba* (for *Ay-ba*), *Ašba* (for *Aš^w-ba*), *Axba* (for *Ax-ba*), *Dzyba* (for *ʒə-ba*), *Kilba* (for *K^ɔəl-ba*), *Kocba* (for *K^waž-ba*).

Some big families had their patronymic subdivisions, called *tq^wəm* (< Pers), or more rarely *ab.an.para* (lit. 'father-mother-son-ABSTR; cf. Abx *abjə.para*), based on the name of a common ancestor; e.g. the patronymic name *Š'ad-r.ʃa* ('the Š'ads')//*Š'ad-jə.pac^wa* ('Š'ad-his-sons') represents a branching of the family clan *Xacəj-r.ʃa*, the aristocratic families *Zawrəm* and *Sid* were regarded as patronymic offshoots of the Abx clan *Marš'an*, etc.

3.1. Social status of surnames. Within the past feudal system, certain surnames used to belong to highest aristocracy (*ahə* 'prince'), others – to nobles (*a-ʃmasta-dəw* 'big aristocrat' and *a-ʃmasta/ʃamsta* 'aristocrat'), peasants (*nxaʃ^wə*) and lower status social groups (*ləg* 'slave', *ʃ^wnaʃ^wə* '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: *Bəjbard*, *Daraq^wa*, *K^ɔac^w*, *Law* (related to Abx princely clan *Ač^ɔba*), *Q'əč*, *Š'antajmər*. The Tapanta noble families had such surnames as *Ajsan*, *Jaš*, *Lač^wəš*, *Šarmat*, *Tram*, *Lij*, *Š'andar*, *Š'əw*, etc. The Ashkharywa groups were ruled by such aristocrat family clans as *Anč'a-*

q^wa (related to Abx princely clan *Aš-ba*), *Egəboq^wa*/*Gəboq^wa*, *Etləx^w*, *Gərgia*, *K^wəž*, *Sid* (offshoot of the Abx clan *Maršian*), *Tam*, *Tanaš*, *Zawrəm* (offshoot of the *Maršians*), 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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