



Child Naming Traditions among the Karaite Turks

Karay Türklerinde Çocuğa Ad Verme Gelenekleri

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Abstract

The Science of Anthroponymy (Eng. Anthroponymy, German Anthroponymie, Fr. Anthroponymie, Russian Антропонимия) deals with proper names, closely following their historical development, examining them in terms of origin, and is considered a sub-branch of Onomastics. A tradition has been created within the Turkish tribes regarding the science of personal names and it has been considered important. This tradition continues among the Karaites, a Turkic tribe born in Iraq in the VIIIth century, who adopted the Karaite sect, which accepts the Tanakh as the sole source of religious rulings. Since it is believed that the name given to a child will directly affect his/her character, his/her place in society, his/her family and his/her future, naming is considered not an ordinary affair among the Karaite Turks. For this reason, the Karaites, despite being under the influence of the Karaite sect and

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culture, continue their traditions and customs in naming their children and generally prefer to give their children a national name, either a single name or one of two names. For example, single names include *Altın, Arslan, Atçapaar, Aytola, Aytolı, Babakay, Gürek, Balhatun, Karaman, Kumuş, Biçe, Babay, Oğul, Oynak, Parlak* etc. Two-part names include *Anna-Akbike, Diana-Altın, Nina-Altın* etc. In this study, it is emphasized what kinds of names are given to newborn Karaite children and for what purposes. In determining this information, firstly, historical and current data and dictionaries written on this subject were utilized, and then field research was conducted by using observation and interview techniques with two source persons residing in Lithuania/Trakai, where Karaite Turks live densely.

Keywords: *science of personal names, naming, Karai sect, Karai Turks, naming in Karai Turks*

Öz

Özel adları konu edinen, tarihsel gelişimini yakından takip eden, köken bilgisi açısından inceleyen ve Ad Biliminin bir alt bilim dalı olarak görülen Kişi Adları Bilimi (İng. Anthroponymy, Alm. Anthroponymie, Fr. Anthroponymie, Rus. Антропонимия), Türk boylarının kendi içerisinde bir gelenek oluşturmuş ve önemsenmiştir. Kişi adları, kişiye toplum nazarında bir hüviyet kazandırdığı için sosyo-kültürel ve hukukî bir işleve sahiptir. VIII. yüzyılda Irak'ta ortaya çıkan ve Tanah'ı (Ahd-i Atik (Tevrat/Tora, Peygamberler/Neviim ve Kitaplar/Ketuvim)) dinî hükümlerin yegâne kaynağı olarak kabul eden ve Karâî mezhebini benimsemiş bir Türk boyu olan Karaylarda da bu ad verme geleneği devam etmektedir. Çocuğa verilen adın onun karakterini, toplum içindeki yerini, ailesini ve geleceğini doğrudan etkileyeceğine inanıldığı için Karay Türklerinde ad verme sıradan bir olay olarak kabul edil(e)mez. Bu sebeple Karaylar, Karâîlik mezhebinin ve kültürünün etkisi altında kalmalarına rağmen çocuğa ad vermede gelenek ve göreneklerini devam ettirmede ya tek ad ya da ikili adlardan birinde çocuklarına genellikle millî bir ad vermeyi tercih etmektedirler. Mesela tek adlarda; *Altın, Arslan, Atçapaar, Aytola, Aytolı, Babakay, Gürek, Balhatun, Karaman, Kumuş, Biçe, Babay, Oğul, Oynak, Parlak* vb. İkili adlarda; *Adam-Karaman, Anna-Akbike, Anna-Aytolı, Diana-Altın, Nina-Altın, Raisa-Davleta, Simon-Arslan, Yakov-Babakay* vb. Bu çalışmada, Karay Türklerinin yeni doğan çocuğa kim/ler tarafından hangi tür adlar verildiği ve bu adın verililiş amaçları üzerinde durulmuştur. Bunun yanında ad verilirken uygulanan bir dizi ritüeller hakkında bilgi verilmiştir. Bu bilgilerin tespitinde ilkin bu konuda yazılmış tarihî ve güncel veriler ile sözlüklerden yararlanılmış, sonrasında Karay Türklerinin yoğun olarak yaşadığı Litvanya/Trakai'de ikamet etmekte olan iki kaynak kişi ile gözlem ve görüşme teknikleri kullanılarak alan araştırması yapılmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: *kişi adları bilimi, adlandırma, Karâî mezhebi, Karay Türkleri, Karay Türklerinde ad verme*

Introduction

Everything we see, we perceive, we feel or we touch, briefly all kinds of entity or assets around us are called with a name. With this respect, the branch of science that deals with the names of objects, assets or entity, is called as Onomastics. One of the areas of study in the field of proper names (İng. Onomastics, Fr. Onomastique, German Onomastik, Namenkunde, Bezeichnungslehre, Rus. Ономастика) of onomastics is *the Science of Personal Names (Anthroponymy)*. Folklorists, linguists, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, etc. examine the aspects related to their own fields in this branch of science. Name types such as first names, middle names, surnames, nicknames and epithets are included in the science of personal names. The cultural data of societies, their interactions with each other, the religious, historical, political, socio-cultural environments and socio-economic structures they are affiliated with are directly effective in the formation of the naming tradition (Sakaoğlu, 2001: 9). These kinds of structures are quite effective for parents in the duration of giving name to the their newborns, infants. When giving a name to their child, parents especially take the following into consideration:

The day, month and season of the child's birth, shrines and visits, attributes of God, prophets, relatives of the prophets, historical heroes and political leaders, animals, minerals, plants, the place where the child was born, gratitude, appreciation, admiration, feelings of friendship, deceased elders, toponymy (place names), geographical elements, cosmic, celestial and meteorological elements, spiritual organs, harmonious names, names related to fashion and cultural changes and the life-giving force. (Örnek, 1977: 149-157)

Before the adoption of monotheistic religions in all Turkic tribes, the principles of naming were almost the same. The names of the children certainly reflected the time of birth (morning, night), the season (winter, spring, summer, autumn), whether the child was wanted or unwanted, and the order of coming into the family (Поляков, 2019: 40). One child was given two names. Today, the first name name which takes the place of forename is given in a ceremony either after birth or when the umbilical cord is cut. The duality of names is also related to the giving a forename in case of a serious illness of the child. Among the Karaites, the second name given continues to exist independently, and the first is sometimes preserved only in official documents. The national name is usually accompanied by a name generally accepted in the region of residence. For example, *Toteke-Tatyana*, *Mielke-Emilia* etc. (SP 1).

In Turkic tribes, the naming ceremony for a child was usually as follows: Shortly after birth, people gathered at home, ate and drank, and the father, midwife or the oldest wise person attending the naming ceremony gave the child a name or two names when deemed appropriate. The midwife also collected the gifts that the guests brought for the child. The name given by the mother and father in advance is not the real name and is the child's temporary name. As we see in the Book of Dede Korkut, the child can receive his real name after showing any success or heroism either in hunting or in war. In fact, many years could be waited for the child to earn his own name (Balta, 2013: 196). The same situation was seen among the Yakuts in very old times. Among the Yakuts, the name given to the child when he was a child was not considered a real name and in order for the person to have a real name, he was expected to draw a bow and shoot an arrow, in short, to show some success (İnan, 2020: 176) and the child would earn his

name as a result of a heroic act. Similarly, in the story of Shah Ismail, Shah Ismail was not called by his name because he did not achieve any success as a result of his own achievements and was characterised as ‘nameless bey’ by the children. In the following process, as a result of his historical achievements, he took off his individual shirt and assumed a social identity (Şayhan, 2020: 37-38). Ultimately, the name carries the essence of the individual while integrating the person with the historical context of the society in which they were born and raised.

Purpose of the study

The primary objective of this study is to compile and identify the naming traditions of Karaite Turks from oral and written sources. The scope of the study is limited to Lithuania/Trakai.

Method

To identify the naming traditions of Karaite Turks, we first utilized relevant historical data and dictionaries. Field research was then conducted using observation and interview techniques with two participants living in the Trakai region of Lithuania, a region densely populated by Karaite Turks. Data were collected from these participants through open-ended (unstructured) interviews. Data were analyzed using a descriptive analysis approach.

1. Names among Karaite Turks

The Karaites, who are ethnically Turkish, call themselves *Karaites*, *Karay*, *Keray* and they describe themselves as *Karaites* and attribute their origins not to the Israelites but to the Khazar Turks. Historical data also show that the Karaite Turks adopted their own religious understanding within Karaism and Judaism. They accept the Torah as holy book and reject the Mishnah and Talmud, by this direction they have a different understanding from the Rabbinic / Talmudist Jews (Firkovičius, 1994: 34; Дубинский, 2005: 41). In this respect, the Karaites continue their national traditions and customs in naming children, despite being under the influence of the Karaite sect and culture.

The most valuable information on the names and surnames of the Karaites are the metrical notebooks of the Tavrida and Odessa spiritual councils, kept in the State Archives of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Another important source of the anthroponymy of the Karaites is the gravestone inscriptions from the Balta Tiymez cemetery in the İosafat valley near Çufut-Kale, where the dead were sometimes brought for burial from far distance (SP 2). There are also lots of memorial gravestones for those whose bodies could not be buried in the main Karaite cemetery for various reasons (Чижова, 2003: 76). Such graves are called Yolcutaş or Dikmetaş. Yolcutaş or Dikmetaş are erected for those who made significant contributions to the Karaites (Altınkaynak, 2018: 64-65) or those who died abroad (Kalafat, 1998: 57). Many of these tombstones were read by the Karaite archaeologist A. S. Firkovich and published in his book *Avne Zikaron*. The inscriptions on these tombstones were also read, studied and analyzed by O. Babalishvili, Yu. Kokizov, A. Polkanov, A. Spitsyn, V. Filonenko and D. Khvolson.

Studies on the name and surnames of the Karaite Turks have been carried out by Firkoviç, Lebedeva, Polkanov, Dubinskiy, Kruglevich, Hafuz, Abayev, Abramao, Aristov, Vaysenberg,

Vostrov, Gordlevskiy, Guboglo, Darbeyeva, Canuakov, Dron, Kusimova, Nikolov, Potapov, Rudnih, Sadikov, Suslova, Şayhulov, Şatınova, Samoylovich and Şapşal (Чижова, 2003: 76; Altınkaynak, 2006: 128). In addition, the *Караимско-русско-польский словарь* “Karaite Turkish-Russian-Polish Dictionary” published by Baskakov, Zajackowski and Şapşal in 1974 can be included in the studies on name and surnames. This dictionary, deals with the vocabulary of Karaite Turkish, which is almost extinct, besides, also covers Karaite names. In addition to this work, Crimean Karaite names are also included in the *Справочник личных имен народов РСФСР* “Guide to Personal Names of the Peoples of the RSFSR” published in 1979 and the *Русско-караимский словарь. Крымский диалект* “Russian- Karaite Dictionary. (Crimean Dialect)” published in 1995.

The most comprehensive work on this subject is the book published by Anna Y. Polkanova, a Crimean Karaite, entitled *Антропонимы крымских караимов* “Anthroponyms of the Crimean Karaites”. This study was published in Crimea in 2012. This book consists of 380 pages. With this work, Polkanova aimed to compile the anthroponyms of the Crimean Karaite Turks. During the editing of this book, she utilized the complete records of community certificates, passports, and documents of the Tavrida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Councils to determine forgotten anthroponyms. She compiled about 1700 anthroponyms, including more than 1100 surnames and their variants. About 100 of them date back to the ancient Turkic ethnonyms of the Orkhon-Yenisey inscription period.

In this study, Polkanova found a close relationship between names, surnames, ethnonyms and toponyms, which are the reflection of the ancient national tradition and different layers of beliefs ranging from Paganism, Shamanism and Tengrism to Karaism. He divided names and surnames into two large groups according to their origin: *Turkic, Arab-Persian, Biblical* and *Christian* (Полканова, 2012: 9). This division was also made by S. Weisenbeg, A. Dubinskiy, Y. Kokizov, A. Samoylovich and A. I. Polkanov. Polkanova also drew attention to the many similarities and parallels between the anthroponyms and ethnonyms of Turkic peoples living in a vast geography from Altai to Crimea.

In the study, for example, the name *Gumus* is given as follows:

Gumush, Gumüş ‘silver’

In the Karaite-Russian-Polish dictionary: gumush “silver”; synonyms: kimis k, kumish k, kumush k, kumush I.

It is mentioned as a proper name in *Drevneturkskiy Slovar*.

This name lives among Azerbaijanis, Altais, Gagauz, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Karachay-Balkars, Nogais, Turks, Turkmen, Crimean Tatars, Khakass, Kalmyks, etc. (Полканова, 2012: 118)

In the study, for example, the name *Cigit* is given as follows:

Cigit ‘brave man, young man’

In *Drevneturkskiy Slovar*: cigit - young, young man.

Name: Cigit, used by Karachay-Balkars, Kyrgyz, Crimean Tatars;

Yigit, by Crimean Tatars; Jigit, by Kyrgyz; Cıgit used by Gagauz, also seen as a surname (Полканова, 2012: 119).

In the study, for example, the name *Bota, Boto, Botta* is given as follows:

Bota, Boto, Botta: ‘Baby camel’. As a name it is used as Bota among the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, Botaş again among the Kazakhs and Kumyks, Botay, Botbay among the Kazakhs, Botta among the Karachay-Balkars. In *Drevneturkskiy Slovar*: Botu, baby camel; Botuk, baby camel taken from its mother. (Полканова, 2012: 109)

Another important work is *Крымские караимы. Научно-популярная монография* “The Karaites of Crimea. Scientific-Popular Monograph” study published by Vladimir Polyakov in 2019. After giving a brief explanation about the names of the Karaites on pages 40-44 of this work, Polyakov gave the names of men and women in a family with the surname of Turşu¹ from the Crimean Karaites on pages 42-43-44 (Поляков, 2019: 42-44).

2. Male names in the Turşu family

| Name | Meaning |
|--|--|
| Aaron, Aaron | Enlightened (Old Hebrew) |
| Abram | Father of nations (Old Hebrew) |
| Abraham | Father of nations (Old Hebrew) |
| Azaria | Yahweh helped (Old Hebrew) |
| Ananias | The Lord was merciful (Old Hebrew) |
| Babakay | Proud father (Turkish) |
| Baruch, Beraha | Blessed (Old Hebrew) |
| Benjamin, Benjamin | My favorite son (literally the son of the right hand) |
| Gelel | Praiseworthy (Old Hebrew) |
| David | Beloved (Old Hebrew) |
| Daniel | God judged me (Old Hebrew) |
| Ilija, Iliago, Iliagu, Ilya, Elyagu | My God is Yahweh. The name of the prophet who ascended into heaven in a chariot of fire. He comes at every circumcision and at every Passover. |
| Joseph | The Lord repaid (Old Hebrew) |
| Isaac | He laughed (Old Hebrew) |
| Ichak | Its etymology has not been determined. |
| Mevorah | Its etymology has not been determined. |
| Moisey | drawn from the water (Old Hebrew) |
| Moshe, Moshu | drawn from the water (Old Hebrew) |
| Mark, Mordehay, Morthay | the Babylonian god Marduk |
| Murat | Desired (Arabic) |
| Nahamu, Nogamu, Nagamu (diğer adıyla Babakay). | Comfort, consolation (Old Hebrew) |
| Netanya | God's gift (Old Hebrew) |
| Saduk | True (Old Hebrew) |
| Samuil | God heard (Old Hebrew) |
| Sima | Heard (Old Hebrew) |
| Simha | Joy (Old Hebrew) |
| Semyon | Hearing God (Old Hebrew) |
| Solomon, Şolema | Peaceful (Old Hebrew) |
| Şelomit | Peaceful (Old Hebrew) |
| Şemarya | God has protected (Old Hebrew) |
| Ezra, İsra | Help (Old Hebrew) |
| Eliezer | Aid bearer (Old Hebrew) |
| Elia | Sun (Greek) |
| Emmanuel | God is with us |
| Ephraim, Ephraim | Fertile (Old Hebrew). |
| Yusuf | Turkish variant of the name Yusuf |
| Yufuda | God's gift (Old Hebrew) |
| Jacob | Pursuing, cunning (Old Hebrew) |

3. Female names in the Turşu family

| Name | Meaning |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Akbike | Pure lady (Turkish) |
| Altın | Gold (Turkish) |
| Anna, Hannah | Mercy, grace (Old Hebrew) |
| Arzu | Desired (Persian) |
| Baruha, Beruha, Beruha, Vera. | Blessed (Old Hebrew) |
| Bikeneş ¹ | Lady Counsel (Old Hebrew) |
| Bice/Biçe ² | Madam, princess (Old Hebrew) |
| Biyana ³ | Etymology not determined. |
| Bebüş, Bübüş, Bibus, Bubus, Bitsa. | A small hostess (Old Hebrew) |
| Gülüş | Small rose, rose (Turkish) |
| Gümüş | Silver (Turkish) |
| Dina | Narrowed (Old Hebrew) |
| Mamuk ⁴ | Etymology not determined. |
| Milka, Milka | Queen (Old Hebrew) |
| Miryam | Lady, bitter (Old Hebrew) |
| Nazlı | Cool, coquettish (Persian) |
| Rahel, Rahıl | A sheep, a lamb (Old Hebrew) |
| Revveka, Rivka | Harness (Old Hebrew) |
| Sarra | A lady, a noble woman. |
| Sultan | Sultan's daughter (Turkish) |
| Toteş | Sister (Turkish) |
| Firsin | Etymology not determined. |
| Frusun | Etymology not determined. |
| Havva | Alive (Old Hebrew) |
| Haniş | Little lady (Turkish) |
| Esther, Stira | Star (Old Hebrew) |
| Esfir | Star (Old Hebrew) |

Among them, there are completely Turkish names: *Akbike*, *Altın*, *Gülüş*, *Gümüş*, *Sultan*, *Toteş*, *Haniş*. There is only one male name: *Babakay*. Iranian names: *Arzu* and *Nazlı* probably don't have anything related with religion (Поляков, 2019: 44). They are the popular names of that period.

The origin of common names among the Karaites is as follows:

Bahsi/Bahsi: Probably 'writer, educator, sage'. Because in the Ottoman palace, those who knew the Uyghur script were called 'bakshi'⁶

Babakay: It may mean 'my father' or 'my grandfather', 'the respected elder of the family', we can assume that it was formed with the +kAy diminutive suffix. For example, in

Kazan Tatar Turkish, this suffix is added to proper names and relatives' names and carries the expression 'respect': *Gölkây, İlkây, Saniâkây, Sylukay* (Lexicology of the Tatar language, 2022: 54).

Biçe: In Sevortyan's dictionary, it is recorded as 'lady', 'lady of the house' in Turkish dialects of Turkey, Kumuk, Tatar, Bashkir, Chuvash dialects. While giving an etymological explanation, Sevortyan says: "it could be thought of as *biy + ka* (diminutive suffix). Clauson thought so, but Räsänen's view may be more realistic, that is, *+kA, +çA* may not be diminutive suffixes but a suffix indicating woman. Doerfer and Zajaczkowski also hold this second view" (Sevortyan, 1978: 134-135).

Kargal-ata (Bürküt-ata): The word 'Bürküt' is common among Turkic-speaking peoples such as Turkmens, Kazakhs, Tuvans and Kyrgyz, for whom the golden eagle is a totem (Tolstov, 1935: 6).

Tohtamış: The most famous historical figure bearing this name is Toktamish, Khan of the Golden Horde (14th century). (14. yüzyıl). Тохтамакъ (tohtamak), it is recorded in the dictionary with the meanings of stop [to stand, to stop movement; to consolidate to be present, to pause] (Zakhariy, 2007: 98). This name probably gained popularity among the Karaites due to their Turkish origin and cultural ties. Perhaps it symbolized the stopping of something unwanted (disease, misfortune, trouble); that is, the child named with this name could be perceived as the person who "stops" or "ends" negativity.

The study on this subject in Turkey is the article "Karaite Names and Surnames" published by Erdoğan Altınkaynak in 2006. After giving information about the names working on the subject of Karaite names and surnames, Altınkaynak stated that the Turkish, Arabic and Persian names of the Crimean Karaites were frequently used in the Middle Ages. However, names taken from Christianity and the Bible are more common for men, while Old Testament and Slavic names are more common for women nowadays. Then, he listed the names and surnames of Karaites for men and women, but did not provide any information on the origins of the names and surnames.

In addition, religious names of Karaites take place in the legend of *Beşik-Tav* 'Beşik-Dağ' in the book entitled *Crimean Legends* published by Anastasiia Zherdieva in the year 2022: *Musa, Yakov, İshak, Ovadya* (son of İshak), *İlyagu* (grandson of İshak).

4. Naming traditions among Karaite Turks

In folklore studies, naming is considered and examined under the title of "birth", which is one of the transition periods in human life. Naming a child, which is a lower stage of birth, is the organization of some ceremonies to bless this new state of the child and to protect it from certain dangers and harmful effects believed to intensify during this time.

In Turkic tribes, care is taken to ensure that the name carries a symbolic essence that will shape and stamp the child's character, personality, future, place and success in society (Örnek, 1977: 148). For example; most Kazakh names reflect various wishes: wealth (*Taybagar, Ayranbay, Zhylykaydar, Bayzhigit*); intelligence, talent (*Akylzhan, Danyshpan,*

Kuke, Onerbay, Kalambay); generosity, nobility (*Myrzabay, Faiz, Zhomart, Ismet*); happiness, success (*Bakdaulet, Zhemiskul, Saltanat, Nurgul*); beauty (*Aigul, Nakysh, Gullei, Perizat, Meruert*); that the descendant would be the support of parents, people (*Nursultan, Omirserik, Askar, Esmurat*); so that the descendant would be a respected person, leader (*Bibol, Rais, Amirbek, Akimzhan, Malik*); so that he would have a good character (*Zhibek, Patsai, Makpal*). Similarly, Uzbek Turks give their children names symbolizing wishes of strength and courage such as *Temur* and *Ulugbek*. For this reason, since the names given to the Karaites concern not only the individual but also the community in which he lives, a special naming ceremony is held (SP 1). The day when the child will be named, all close relatives, especially parents, especially prepare and wear stylish (SP 1). Because this naming ceremony is a mysterious power that represents a connection between the Karaite child's destiny and his name.

In ancient times, the younger children of a family with many children were often given to childless relatives, who were recognized by the society as parents with all rights and obligations, specifically for the continuation of the Karaite lineage (SP 1). It was a common tradition for a mother to breastfeed unborn child together with her own. In the future, these families would treat relatives and non-breeds equally and raise their foster siblings together. The name was given by the gazzan at the celebrations after the birth of the child. Usually the name was agreed upon with the parents in advance. However, beginning from the end of XIX. century and the start of the XX. century, parents increasingly began to name children themselves, neglecting both national and religious traditions (Полканов, 1994 b: 28). In reality, this situation was due to the political difficulties of those times.

Among Karaites, both boys and girls are given names in a ceremony. These ceremonies are held on Saturday (i.e.; *Shabbat* “rest day”), two weeks after the birth of a girl. After the visit of the child's father to the kenas, guests are invited to the celebration. For boys, naming is done on the eighth day, the day of circumcision. From the statement in Genesis 21/3-4 of the Torah; “And Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the appointed time which God had told him. And Abraham called the name of the son that was born to him, which Sarah bore to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.”

It can be interpreted that Hz. Abraham circumcised his son Isaac after naming him (Koçak, 2001: 318). In Rabbani Jews, names are given to boys after they are circumcised, and to girls after they have completed their first month. Among the Karaites of Israelite origin, boys are named 33 days after birth and girls 66 days after birth (Arslantaş, 2011: 404; Koçak, 2021: 318). Because the purity period of a woman who gives birth to a boy is considered shorter than that of a mother who gives birth to a girl (Gündüz, 2014: 87):

Say to the Israelites, “If a woman conceives and gives birth to a male child, she shall be unclean for seven days, just like her menstrual period... She shall wait thirty-three days to purify herself from her bleeding.” (Leviticus 12:2-4) But if she gives birth to a female child, she shall be unclean for two weeks, just like her menstrual period, and she shall wait sixty-six days to purify herself from her bleeding (Levililer, 12: 5).

In the old days, at the birth of a girl, there was no entertainment and drinks were not served as at the birth of a boy. Because a boy would carry the ancestor's surname and ensure the continuation of the lineage. Only the guests who came were served national dishes (SP 1). This tradition has changed since the beginning of the XX. century. It is seen that all the ceremonies were also performed for the girl child except the circumcision ceremony performed for the boy (SP 1; Koçak, 2021: 315). After the worship in the kenesa on Saturday, only the men sit at the table at home and wait for the Karaites' religious leader, the hazan, to name the child before starting the feast. Women can only sit at the table after the men get up. Because; The Karaites are patriarchal like the Rabbani Jews. Since social life is generally shaped according to gender, women do not have much role in social life. Women are responsible for giving birth to children, protecting their families and ensuring the continuation of the lineage. Because of the Karaite belief, Karaite women had to abandon the social and political status that the old Turkish religion gave them. However, we can say that this situation has changed today (SP 2).

This ceremony lasts for about 2-3 hours. Girls can also attend the naming ceremony of the girl child. However, girls do not attend the naming ceremony of the boy (SP 2). The guests are served national dishes Ak-halva "white halva", various meat dishes, çığbörök (Kıbın (a type of pie made of mutton and onion) in the Lithuanian Karaites), Katlama, Umaç, Tutmaç, Hazar Katmağı, Kınış, Kaburtık, Tımbıl and various drinks, especially Krupnik. The guests also bring various gifts for the child (SP 1; SP 2).

The name of the child is usually given by the hazan, but the name of the child is decided by the mother and father before (Чижова, 2003: 75; SP 2). On the day the child is named, the name given by the hazan becomes official and the name is recorded by the hazan who acts as a notary (SP 2).

Hazan prays the following prayer during the naming ceremony of a boy or girl:

Seniñim ben beni kurtar ey düz iden fikrini göñlümiñ, ömre kadar kahrılanır mısın ve dünyaya kadar bana darılır mısın, düzü adımlarımı iziñe ey Allahı kuvetimiñ, pak kalb yarat baña ey Allah ve kavi ruh yeñirt içimde (Dubinskiy, 1895: 3). "Oh, I am yours, who corrects the mind of my heart, save me, will you be upset and angry with me forever, oh God of my strength, guide my steps to your path, oh God, create a pure heart for me and grow a sound spirit within me".

Ady kibik ki biž atejbyz uşpu tuvmuşcha, atalsyn ady anyn ulusumuzda: "We are also naming this newborn, let his name be called in our nation"

.....ıvlu (kzy) abjly.....

"..... Son (daughter) precious"

Tieñri saklejeý any, Tieñri tirliktia tutcheý any, Tieñri kipliagiej any! Bijañdirsiñ atasyn tuvmachtan da kuvansyn anasy jemişi byla kursahynyn! "May God protect him, may God keep him alive, may God strengthen him! May he bring joy to his father with his birth, may his mother rejoice in the fruit of her crop!"

(*Ēr ulanha*): *Bolhej karındaş jedigia da ata siegižgia!* “(To the son): Let there be seven brothers and eight fathers!”

(*Kyzha*): *Bolhej silli jedigia da ana siegiž ěr ulanlarha!* “(To the daughter): Let there be a sister for seven and a mother for eight sons!”

Artxeylar biyañlär ortamızda, artxeylar yarlıhaşlar; artxeylar yaxşı xabarlar; artxeylar törâvçülär. Tiri bolhey bu tuvmuş uşpu atasına da anasına. Da nêçik ki yetiştik ad atalmahına; aley yetiškêybiz biyañinâ da toyuna. Aley artxey da aley yayılhey. “Let joy and compassion increase among us, let the number of parents increase by giving good news. Let this baby give life to his parents. Just as we have reached the naming, so let us reach the joy and the wedding. Let such (events) increase and spread.”

Şükür beriyiz Tênrininâ ol köklärnin; ki dünyaha deyin şevahatı Anın. Tênrî kiplik ulusuna bêrgêy; Tênrî alhışlahey ulusun bazlıx bıla. “Give thanks to that God of heaven for his eternal intercession. May God grant his nation abundance and blessing; may God bless his nation with peace.”

Maxtavludur Tênrî dünyaha deyin; kerti da tüğäl. “There is no doubt that God is to be praised forever.”

Bariyızha Bazlıx! “Peace be upon you all!” (Firkovicus, 1998: 193; Koçak, 2021: 318-319).

After the Crimean Karaite hazan gives the child a name and finishes the prayer, he turns to the family and guests and says *kutlu bolsun* “blessed be the one”, while the Lithuanian Karaite hazan says *alxışlı bolhey* “blessed be the one” (SP1; SP 2). Then the guests give the child various gifts and leave money for the family to be distributed to the poor (SP 2).

In Anatolia, to name a newborn baby, either an imam or a cleric is invited to the house. The cleric prays for the child to be moral, useful and proper for his family and society. Then he turns the child towards the qibla, recites the ezan in his right ear and prays. He also calls the iqama in the child’s left ear. Then the child’s name is given and the child is called three times. Thus, the process of naming the child is completed. As can be seen, this naming process performed through prayers by the hazan or a person selected by the father among the the Muslim Turkic people gives the name a religious character (Örnek, 1977: 149). The fact that this process is carried out by the hazan among the Karaites indicates the sanctity of the name.

As mentioned above, Karaite names can be divided into several groups according to their origin: Turkish, Arab-Persian, old biblical, Christian, i.e. Greek and Slavic. With the migration of some Karaites from Crimea to other cities of Russia, Christian names began to appear. Official church did not forbid giving children Christian names, but recommended the parents directing to biblical and Turkish names (Чижова, 2003: 76). Currently, modern European names are more frequently used in Karaites (SP1; SP 2). For example; *Adam, Aleksey, Aleksandra, Anastasia, Anna, Arturas, Daniel, Ela, Emilia, Irina, Karina, Liudmila, Mariola, Nadiya, Nina, Olga, Sergey, Tatiana, Virginija, Viktorija, Yuriy* etc.

The basis of the Karaite belief is based on the belief in the one God called the Old Testament which is the only holy book, and the old Turk Tengri. This belief differs from Rabbinic Judaism in that they believe in only the written Torah and do not believe in works based on interpretation created in later periods. In this context, the Karaites adopted the names of the characters in the Old Testament in the Bible, as well as the religion, and gave these names to their girls and boys: *Esther, Ezra, Kamila, Milka, Miryam, Musa, Sam, Sara, Sima, Tamar* etc. (SP 1; SP 2)

The Karaites also preserved their pure Turkish names. For boys, they gave these names: *Altın, Appak, Arslan, Atçapaar, Aytola, Baba, Babay, Babacan, Babakay, Babaşah, Bahşı, Balıkay, Çaban, Gürek, Karaman, Kefeli, Oğul, Oynak, Paşa, Parlak, Parlamak, Sarı, Tohtamış, Tohtar, Tohtemir, Ulu-ata/Olu-ata* “büyük baba”, *Yalpacık*; for girls: *Acıkey/Hacıkey, Açkey, Akbike, Altın, Altınkız, Arslan, Arzu, Aytolı* ‘full moon’ *Balhatun, Biçe, Bikeç* “noble woman”, *Bikelek, Biyan, Biyana* ‘lady, mother’, *Emçi, Güllüş, Gümüş, Hanike, Hanış*, ‘a khan’s wife’, *Hatın, Hatun, Kızçık, Kumuş, Otu, Pambuk, Sarı, Severgelin* ‘beloved’, *Sonuk, Sultan, Tansık, Tohtar, Totay* ‘aunt’, *Toteş* etc. (SP 1; SP 2)

After the adoption of the Old Testament religion instead of the old Turkish religion, the heads of families did not care much about giving their daughters the same names as in the Bible, they started giving their sons the names of the patriarchs and prophets in the Holy Bible. An example of this can be seen in an inscription found in the margins of the Sudak Synaxarion in 718, which mentions the “daughter of Aaron of the Khazars”. The Khazar, who accepted the new faith, accepted the biblical name, but gave his daughter an old pagan name. Another footnote mentioning a Khazar nobleman mentions “Rabbi Noa/Noah, son of Bukin, son of Bukin”. According to the Crimean Karai A. Polkanov, the old names stubbornly persisted for a very long time among men and were replaced very slowly first by Biblical names and then by Christian names (Полканов, 1994a: 51). At that time, the Turkish names of women have survived today among Crimean and Lithuanian Karaites, however in modern times they have begun to be replaced by Christian names.

Although the clergymen among the Karaite Turks strictly adhered to religious norms and preferred biblical names, the old Turkish folk tradition was also preserved. For example; according to the old Turkish belief, parents would give the baby a national name or a nickname due to the belief that the evil spirit (al/albastı/alkarısı/alanası/alkızı) would possess the child who remained nameless. The child’s official name was given later. The national name was used in daily life, and the religious name was used officially. Sometimes both names were recorded in documents by the hazan. For example; *Yakov Babakay, Esfir, Kumuş* (Полканов, 1994b: 27; Suleymanov, 2012: 113). The existence of a national and religious name is a phenomenon seen in other Turkish tribes. For example; while religious Muslim names accompany the old folk names among the Turks of Turkey, there are Orthodox Christian names among the Altays, Gagavuzs and Kreşin Tatars (Полканов, 1994b: 27). The tradition of giving double names is also widespread among Russians. The name given to the child at baptism is usually included in official documents and is known only by the parents.

In January 1906, the Spiritual Council of Tavriya and Odessa officially allowed parents to name their children at their own discretion. But even before this decision, the Karaites living among the Russian population changed their names to Russian and Christian. Thus, *Altın* became 'Anna or Alla'; *Beruka* became 'Vera'; *Gulesh*, *Guluf* became 'Galina, Olga'; *Yelişeva* became 'Yelena, Yelizaveta', *Maşuk* became 'Mariya', *Nazlı* became 'Nadejda', *Simit* became 'Sima', *Fırsın* became 'Yefrosinya, Kseniya', *Hacıkey* became 'Alla, Asya', etc. Male names were also converted: *Abraham* 'Isaiya', *Isak*, *Nisan* 'Aleksandr', *Ananiy* 'Aleksey', *Ovadia* 'Vadim', *Baruh* 'Boris', *Venyamin* (*Veniyamin*) 'Viktor', *Zara* 'Zahariy', *Seraya* 'Sergey', *Simha* 'Semyon', *Saduk* 'Savely', *Cefanya*, *Çefanya* 'Stepan', etc. (Чижова, 2003: 78). Today, especially in Crimea, Karaite names have been changed as Russian and Christian names (SP 1).

Among the Karaites, for example, almost any word that describes a child's character traits can become a noun: *Şunuk* 'cheerful', *Burçe* 'fidgety', *Oynak* 'playful, playful', *Ganukey* 'determined'; physical qualities: *Alyanak* 'red-cheeked', *Karaman* 'strong man, hero', *Aybeta* 'moon-faced'; a condition related to the birth of a child: *Arzu* 'desired', *Tansık* 'rare'. Boys and girls can be given the same names (Чижова, 2003: 78). However, giving a boy's name to a girl expresses the parents' desire to have a boy (SP 1).

If children in the family had previously been very ill or died, protective names were given to newborns. The reason for this was "the fear of not being able to continue the generation" (Karakaya, 2019, p. 36). For example; *Sonuk* 'Sönuk' or *Kargal -ata* (Bürküt -ata) which means symbolizing rebirth, eternal life, immortality, sunrise. Sometimes mothers and fathers did not want children except for one or two. In that case, if the child was a boy, the name *Toktamış/Tohtamış* was preferred, and if the child was a girl, the name *Toktar / Tohtar* 'durur, kalır' was preferred (Полканов, 1994 b: 27; Altınkaynak, 2006: 130). In addition, if the child was seriously ill and the possibility of recovery was low, one of the close relatives or neighbours would buy the child from his family for a symbolic fee and give the child a new name. The child's family thought that they had deceived the evil spirits with this practice and believed that the child could only survive in this way. If the child later recovered, he would return to his family with the new name given to him. The people who bought him in this difficult situation and helped him recover were considered his second mother and father. These people had a right over the child based on respect (Suleymanov, 2012: 114). This ritual is seen in the entire Turkish world (Kyrgyz, Tatar, Kazakh, Bashkir, Karapapak, Kalmyk, Nogay, etc.) especially in Anatolia. In Anatolia, "children who have no living siblings and were born before are left on the street immediately after birth or, most of the time, in front of a mosque because it is more reliable. Someone who sees the child takes him from there and takes him to his own home. Then the real parents of the child come and supposedly buy the child from the person who took him to his home. Children who are subject to such a ritual are called 'Satılmış' if they are boys and 'Satı' if they are girls" (Düzgün and Yeşildal, 2023: 24). As mentioned above, this naming is a kind of talisman that the mother and father use against evil spirits because they are afraid that the child will be killed. It carries a kind of aim and wish of "I want my child to have a bad name but to live a long and healthy life."

Crimean Karaites would sew blue beads on the child's clothes to protect him from the evil eye (Suleymanov, 2012: 114). This tradition also exists among Karaites. After the child is named, they sew blue beads on the child's clothes (SP 1; SP 2). The reason why this protective bead is blue is related to the fact that while brown and hazel-eyed people are common among the Turks, blue-eyed people are very rare and that blue eyes have an extraordinary power. Due to this belief, the Turks felt the need to hide their children especially from blue-eyed people (İnan, 1963: 3138). For these reasons, today, avoiding people with blue eyes and attaching a blue bead to the left shoulder of a child or the person to be avoided, so that they can see it, in order to neutralize their evil gaze, continues to be widespread as it was in the past (SP 1).

Due to frequent child deaths and diseases in the family, the child is given a protective and derogatory name in order not to attract the attention of dangerous spiritual beings and disease spirits. For example; *Tizek* 'dung', *Çekeley* 'spit', *Sonuk* 'dull', *Shomalak* 'fat', *Yalpacik* 'flat' etc. (SP 1) This situation is also seen among the Shor Turks. In families where children die frequently, the Shors give the child a bad name or call him the name of an animal or bird so that the malicious spirit "Ayna" will be disgusted and leave him. Most often, they call the child by the name of a very old man, hoping that the child will live to the same age (Дыренкова, 1963: 246). The Oyrats, who live according to the 12-year animal calendar, gave the most implausible, even obscene names to children born in the year of the Pig, the last year of the cycle. The reason was the belief that the child would be carried away by these evil spirits (Поляков, 2019: 40). For this reason, bad names were given to protect the child from evil spirits.

The Karaites also bury children who die of an illness within three days of birth or shortly thereafter, but who have not yet been given a name, by giving them a name (SP 1; SP 2). Because this naming situation indicates the individual and social personality of the child.

Among Karaite Turks, parents also try to give their child a beautiful name that predicts health, happiness and well-being (SP 2). For example; *Altın* 'gold', *Akbeyka* 'white lady', *Aybeta* 'moon-faced', *Akbike* 'white woman', *Babay* 'father', *Bekeneş/Bikeneş* 'noble woman', *Bikeç* 'a noble woman', *Biana* 'lady', *Biçe* 'princess', *Bright* 'shine, bright, sparkling', *Sand* 'silver', *Lamçeri* 'shining' etc. Women's names mostly refer to jewellery names: *Gohar* 'elmas', *Elmaz* 'diamond', *Playful* 'thimble and men' (Чижова, 2003: 78; SP 2).

When using ancient biblical names, a child may be named after a deceased relative; it is believed that this relative's spirit will protect the lineage bearing the name. In Turkish culture, this is called the "cult of ancestors" (Yıldız Altın, 2018: 104-117). However, this tradition is not very widespread. Among Karaites, names of Turkish origin predominate among female names, but these have recently been replaced by names of Christian (but not ancient biblical) and European origins (SP 2). Male names of Turkish origin are less common (SP 1).

Research by A. Dubinskiy, A. Samoilovich, N. Shatinova shows that in the Middle Ages, Turkish and Arab-Persian male names were used among the Crimean Karaites, while becoming closer to the present day, they increasingly gave more place to the Bible. It was decided in 1906 to bear exclusively Christian names among the Karaites (Полканов 1994a: 49). According to S. Weissenberg, currently the Christian form prevails among male names. The main reason for this is the special permission of the Department of Foreign Religions for the Karaites to bear Christian names since 1906. (access date: <http://karai.crimea.ru/382-imena-i-familii-karaimov-kryma-kak-pokazateli.html> (26.06.2024; 14:49).

Turkish names were used for women from ancient times until the middle of the 20th century. However, in modern times these names have been replaced by Christian names, and names mentioned in the Bible are only occasionally encountered.

The reasons for the greater use of Turkish names among Karaite women are explained in the studies of B. A. Вишневский, Поляков and Altınkaynak as follows:

a) With the conversion to the Karaite sect, Karaite men gained more authority. Karaite women, on the other hand, became second-class citizens of society. A Karaite father feels proud if he had a boy, but would not feel the same proud if he had a girl. For this reason, he does not stay at home when naming his daughter. He gives the baby girl the name *hazan* in the *kenesa*. The name given was not so important. Therefore, a Karaite girl had a secondary, even enslaved, position compared to a boy.

b) The Karaite sect was not very influential in social life, traditions and customs. Owing to social isolation and loneliness, Karaite women were the protectors of folk traditions, customs, legends and oral folk art.

V. Filonenko notes that among Karaite women, the rules of public morality expressed in folklore are even more important than the requirements of the Karaite sect. Adherence to established ways of life, traditions and customs developed over centuries, a closed lifestyle forced women to stubbornly adhere to old national names that existed long before the Karaites became acquainted with modern life.

c) The fact that the Karaite woman's environment is very conservative compared to men's and in this context, the Karaite woman develops a dependent personality towards the head of the family, obeys blindly and serves only her own interests unconditionally is also effective.

The Karaite women's attachment to their tribal names found all possible support among men. The Karaite woman had a secondary position in the religious area, so that she was not even allowed to enter the *kenasa* until she got married and was kept in the *kenasa* in a special part with a separate entrance.

ç) Most of the names in the Old Testament were male and female names were very few. Men could easily choose the names of the prophets in the holy book for themselves (Полканов, 1994a: 50; Altınkaynak, 2006: 130-131). For example; *Abel* 'Habil, the son of Hz. Adam', *Abram/Avraham*, *Avram* 'Ibrahim', *Adam*, 'Adam', *Afrayim* 'The name of Hz. Joseph's second son Ephraim', *Azariah*, *Eliyu*, *Esau* 'Son of Prophet Isaac', *Gabriel*

‘Gabriel’ (meaning “God is my strength”), *Cain* ‘Cain, son of Prophet Adam’, *Levi* ‘son of Prophet Jacob’, *Misha*, *Mosheh* ‘Prophet Moses’, *Nun* ‘father of Joshua’, *Raphael* (It means “God heals”). Raphael is the angel of healing who visited Abraham after his circumcision.) *Samuel*, *Simon*, *Shlomo* ‘Solomon’, *Terah* ‘Father of Prophet Ibrahim’, *Yishak* ‘Isaac’, *Yismael* ‘Prophet Ismail’, *Yosef*, (Yosef appears in the Bible as one of the 12 sons of Prophet Jacob who were sold as slaves and later served as prime minister to the Pharaoh in Egypt.), *Yuhuda* ‘Judah’ (Koçak, 2021: 48-49) etc.

National and religious traditions transformed these names in some way and they became used among the Turkish tribes as follows: *Musa*, *Moshe*- *Moshaka*, *Moshu*, *Musa*, *Musaba*, *Musabii*; *Ibrahim-Avram*, *Ibrahim*, *Ibrahim*, *Abraş*, *Ibrahim*, *Ibrahim*, *Ibrahim*, *İbraim*, *İbray*; *David-Davud*, *Daut*. All of these names are of religious origin and are found among the Bashkirs, Gagauz, Karaites (Crimean, Lithuanian-Polish Karaites), Karachay-Balkars, Kumyks, Nogays, Tatars. Some of these names are also known among the Kazakhs (*Musabai*), Kyrgyz (*Ibrahim*, *Musa*), Crimean Tatars (*İbraim*), Yakuts (*Davut*, *Musa*), Urums (*Ibrahim*, *Moshu*) (access date: <http://karai.crimea.ru/284-vetkhovzetnye-i-dvojnye-imena-tjurkskikh-narodov.html> (18.08. 2024: 16:26)).

5. Giving/taking double and triple names in Karaites

Crimean and Lithuanian Karaites can give their children double names. According to the Karaite tradition from ancient times to the present day, if a newborn child is given a second name, then the first name is believed to protect the child from the evil eye, diseases and especially evil beings (SP 1; SP 2). As mentioned above, the first name is usually taken from religion, the Bible. The second is completely national Karaite (SP 2). The meaning of giving two names is due to the direct relationship of naming to the concept of magic. Örnek explained this issue as follows:

Since a name constitutes a part of a person, the white or black magic performed on a name will also affect the owner of that name, according to the principle of sympathetic magic, ‘what happens to the part also happens to the whole’. Therefore, the name also plays an important role in witchcraft (Örnek, 1977: 148).

The following examples of male and female double names can be given in Karaites⁶:

Men:

- 1) İlya-Paşa
- 2) İskender-Agabey
- 3) Nagamu-Babakay
- 4) Valentin-Bek

There are names where both the first and middle names are taken from the Bible:

- 1) Bünyamin (Benjamin)-Mikail
- 2) Sima-İshak (İçhak)
- 3) Sima-Mihayıl
- 4) Sima-Moşey

5) Yusuf-Süleyman-Solomon (Shelomo)

In women, in both cases, there are Karaite names next to the biblical name “Anna”:

- 1) Anna-Acıkey/Hacıkey/Adzhikey
- 2) Anna-Akbike
- 3) Anna-Altın
- 4) Anna-Altınkız
- 5) Anna-Arzu
- 6) Anna-Balhatın
- 7) Anna-Bayhatın
- 8) Anna-Çiçek
- 9) Anna-Hatun
- 10) Anna-Toteke

For example; Akbike means “white woman”, Acıkey/Hacıkey/Adzhikey means “(woman) who makes/goes to pilgrimage” (SP 1). When the double names of Karaite women are compared with the names of men, the national names are more numerous. So that in the ancient Karai cemetery Balta-Tiymez near Çift-Kale, Karai archaeologist AS Firkoviç found a tombstone on which two names of a woman were written: *Sara-Hatun*. Here, the former name is taken from the Bible, and the latter is a national name translated as “woman”. The name Hatun is not used much by the Karaites now. It is understood from the tombstones that in the first century AD Turkish names continued to exist among the Karaites.

Currently, among the Karaites, double names are preserved mainly among women:

- 1) Anna-Akbike
- 2) Anna-Aytolu
- 3) Diana-Altın
- 4) Diana- Aytolı
- 5) Diana- Bikeç
- 6) Diana-Sarı
- 7) Diana-Toteş
- 8) Nina-Altın
- 9) Nina-Kızçık
- 10) Raisa-Davleta

In this condition, the first name is widely used in the countries where the Karaites live. In Ukraine (including Crimea), Russia, Lithuania, Poland. Second names are national: *Dovleta* “strong” (dövlet “power”), *Altın* “gold”.

- 1) Sophilena
- 2) Emilia-Sofya

Sophilena combines two names, *Sofia* and *Elena*, which are also common in the countries mentioned above. The same can be said for the name *Emilia-Sofia*.

There are also double names for men. They are not as common as for women:

- 1) Adam-Karaman
- 2) Simon-Arslan
- 3) Yakov-Babakay

Among the Karaites, every name existed parallel to a double surname. For example; for men: *Benyamin, Mikhail, Nagamu, Babakay, İlya, Paşa, Sima, İshak, Yusuf, Süleyman*; for women: *Anna, Akbike, Altın, Diana, Davleta, Adzhikey, Raisa, Sara, Sofya, Emilia*.

Crimean Karaites began to neglect their own religious and national customs from the beginning of the 20th century. In addition, in compliance with the assimilation policy implemented by Russia against them, each family began to give their children Russian names and surnames (Suleymanov, 2012: 115). However, national names continue to be given among the Lithuanian Karaites.

Conclusion

Although the Karaites remain under the influence of the Karaite sect and culture, they continue their national traditions and customs in naming children. Their adoption of a different belief has not destroyed their common customs, traditions and customs that they brought from their roots, on the contrary, it has gained a new dimension with the knowledge they have acquired from the Karaite faith.

Since it is believed that the name given to the child will directly affect his/her character, place in society, family and future, naming is not considered an ordinary event among Karaites, as in all Turkish tribes. In this context, the child is identified by being given a name in the context of the values of the Karaite society, accompanied by a series of rituals. The Karaites' tendencies, religious beliefs, worldviews, social and political structures, traditions and customs serve as inseparable indicators in this identification process. In short, the names of the Karaites bear witness to their ethnic origins in every way.

Today, among Karaites, the Christian form is predominant among boys' names due to the special permission given by the Department of Foreign Religions for Karaites to bear Christian names since 1906. In girls' names, Old Testament, Slavic and, to a lesser extent, Turkish names are used. The reasons for the adoption of Christian names among the Karaites in 1906 should be evaluated in relation to religious and social pressures. In addition, among Karaite Turks, social and family expectations, social and cultural changes, European influence and the modernization process, social status and prestige, etc. are effective in giving a child a name.

It is seen that the reasons for changing names among Karaite Turks are protection from negative energies and spiritual beliefs.

The prevalence of double names among the Karaites is an interesting feature of their onomastics and has several reasons that reflect both their religious affiliation and cultural contacts.

The main reasons for the appearance of second names among the Karaites:

a) The combination of a biblical (religious) and a Turkic (national/everyday) name: This is one of the key reasons.

Biblical name: Karaites profess Karaism, a religion that recognizes only the Old Testament (Tanakh) and rejects the Talmud. Therefore, biblical names were very important to them. These names had deep religious and cultural significance.

Turkic name: At the same time, the Karaites are a Turkic-speaking people, and names of Turkic origin were widely used in their everyday life. These names could be associated with character traits, appearance, events at birth, or were simply traditional for a given area or family.

Everyday practice: Despite religious prescriptions, Turkic names were part of everyday life and culture. They could be used in everyday life, in communication with others, while a biblical name could be “official” or “religious”.

Adaptation to the environment: In regions where Karaites lived among other peoples (for example, Russians, Tatars), Turkic names could be more understandable and familiar to neighbors, or even similar-sounding names from other languages could appear

b) Protective function (in case of illness): A child could be given a second name in case of a serious illness. This was a kind of ritual action, a belief that a new name could “deceive” evil forces or illness, “stop” it (as in the case of the name Tokhtamysh) or give the child a new, happier fate. Such a name could “take root” over time and become the main or second everyday name.

c) Social and clan distinction: A second name, or even a double surname, could indicate belonging to a certain clan, profession, or place of origin. For example, the Karaites had double surnames, where one part could indicate a spiritual rank. It can be assumed that this helped to more accurately identify a person within the community and beyond. Thus, the double names of the Karaites were the result of a complex interweaving of religious traditions, Turkic cultural identity, everyday practices, and even beliefs related to protection and well-being.

Endnotes

- 1 Here it is highly probable that the surname “Turşu” is either a nickname or is related to professional activities such as the pickle trade (Поляков, 2019: 46).
- 2 It is said to be Hebrew, but it is highly probable that it is Turkish. Polkanov gave the word in his work as “noble woman” in Turkish. (Полканов, 1994a: 50).
- 3 It is said to be Hebrew, but it is most likely Turkish. Kokizov and Polkanova recorded this name in Turkish in their studies (Кокизов, 1910: 36; Полканова, 2012: 298).
- 4 The same name is also found among the Crimean Tatars. Anna Polkanova recorded it as a Turkish name with the meanings “mother of the lord, joy” (Полканова, 2012: 297).
- 5 This name comes from the word pamuk “cotton” (Полканова, 2012: 298).
- 6 These informations, were taken from I. A. Shaytan’s work О двойных фамилиях и именах у караимов “On Double Ancestry and Names Among the Karaites” (karaims.com) (access on: 08/5/2024; 10:01).

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Source persons

SP 1: Szymon Juchniewicz, 85, university graduate, retired, date and place of interview: May 15th, 2013- July 12th, 2013 Lithuania/ Trakai

SP 2: Dr. Markus Lavrinovicus, 80, university graduate, technical sciences, hazan (became the spiritual leader of the Lithuanian Karaites on July 10th, 2010), date and place of interview: May 15th, 2011 Lithuania/ Trakai

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