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Name Changes of Soviet Jewish Immigrants to Israel

Abstract

To analyze first-name changes of emigrants from the former Soviet Union, data from a previous investigation were analyzed. About five percent of those interviewed changed their first names upon arrival in Israel. For each individual, origin of the original name, origin of the new (changed) name, and type of change were examined. Hypotheses are given for the reason for name change. The young generation does the most name-changing. Of the reasons for change, phonetic and memorial predominate. The new names are mostly of traditional Hebrew from the Bible (58%) or of Modern Hebrew origin (35%).

Änderungen der Vornamen von Immigranten aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion.

Zusammenfassung

Die Analyse der Änderungen der Vornamen von Immigranten aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion weist darauf hin, daß ca. 5 Prozent der Befragungsteilnehmer ihre Vornamen bei Einwanderung in Israel geändert haben. In der Arbeit werden die Quellen der ursprünglichen und geänderten Vornamen sowie die Typen der Änderungen erörtert. Es werden Hypothesen für die Ursachen solcher Änderungen aufgestellt. Die Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass meistens die jüngere Generation ihreVornamen ändert. Es herrschen zwei Typen der Änderungen vor: phonetischer Typ und „zum Andenken an jemanden". Neue Vornamen sind hauptsächlich traditionelle Bibelnamen oder gegenwärtige jüdische Namen.

Name Changes of Soviet Jewish Immigrants to Israel

Abraham STAHL has provided a description of naming practices in the modern State of Israel (1994). He has traced the policy of imposing Hebrew names on Jewish immigrants from before the founding of the State to the 1980s. But in the 1980s, there began to be a change in policy. This was the result of the arrival of the immigrants from Ethiopia. Then, there was the arrival of immigrants from Russia in the 1990s. The pressure to hebraize names greatly diminished. While there is still pressure to hebraize names, officials and schoolteachers are more tolerant and allow people to make their own decisions. With this as background, the evaluation of a sample of Russian immigrant changes of name can be done.

Over the past 10 years, the political situation in the former Soviet Union has changed and the immigration flood of Jews from Russia to Israel has increased. A significant portion of the Russian Jewish population went to Israel. Some changed their first names on arrival in Israel (or shortly after), while others did not. This investigation will explore answers to questions on the nature of the change of first names:

1. What is the age and social status of the changers?
2. What made the changers change?
3. Is there any relationship between area of residence in the former Soviet Union and name-changing?
4. What is the origin of the original name?
5. Why were the new names chosen?

These questions and others are being addressed in this investigation.

Procedure
The sample

The research from which these data are drawn was directed at naming patterns of 1455 Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union to Israel (LAWSON & GLUSHKOVSKAYA, 1994). It includes two subsamples from different areas of the former Soviet Union: European Russia and Central Asian Russia. Over three quarters of the European Russia sample came from Ukraine, Russia, and Byelorus. The others were from other parts of Russia. The Central Asian sample was 70% from Uzbekistan, 10% from Tadzhikistan, 7% from Kazakhstan and the rest from other parts of Central Asia.

About 5% (66 individuals) of the total sample changed their first names on arrival to Israel (or shortly afterward). Since the focus of this investigation concerns name changes, only the 5% who were changers,

i.e., the 44 individuals from European Russia, and the 22 from Central Asia were studied. Unlike the pattern in Israel a few decades earlier, there seemed to be no pattern of changing the family name. The composition of the sample of changers is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Location of Change of First Name

European Russia

	Men		Women		Men and Women	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
In Russia	4 < 342	1.17%	- < 361	-	4 < 703	3.6 %
In Israel	33 < 342	9.64%*	11 < 361	3.05%	44 < 703	6.3 %
Total	37 < 342	10.82%	11 < 361	3.05%	48 < 703	6.7 %

Central Asia

	Men		Women		Men and Women	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
In Asia	1 < 377	.27%	- < 375	-	1 < 752	0.1 %
In Israel	12 < 377	3.18%	10 < 375	2.67%	22 < 752	2.92 %
Total	13 < 377	3.45%	10 < 375	2.67%	23 < 752	3.06 %

*Comparisons of sex within sample, e.g., 9.64% of the total number of 342 Russian men changed their first names in Israel.

Results
Sex differences

As Table 1 shows there are three times as many male changers who came from European Russia as female (37 vs. 11). The results from Asia are less than half of that of the European sample (23 vs. 48) but do show about the same number for males as for females (13 vs.10).

How can these differences be accounted for, especially the sex differences and between the European and Asian samples? In the Jewish religion, male names have historically been important as a form of religious identification. An observant Jew cannot be circumcised, bar mitzvahed, married, or be buried in a religious ceremony without a Hebrew name. While many Western Jews have a Western name like William or Robert, they will also have a Hebrew name.

Often the Western name has a link of some kind to the Hebrew name. Thus, a Leo or a Leon is often linked to the Hebrew Yehuda (Judah). Why? It is because when the patriarch Jacob on his deathbed gave his blessing to his sons, he compared each of them to an animal. In the case of Yehuda, it was a lion. And now, within Jewish religious circles, it is generally known that a Leo has a Hebrew name of Yehuda. Not all vernacular names followed a clear simple pattern. Lawson and Glushkovskaya (1994, 174) found that with 19 men named Boris, 12 linked the name to a Bechor, 4 to a Baruch, along with other links. These were closer to a phonetic similarity than a semantic similarity.

If a person wanted to change his family name in the former SU it was difficult but possible. However, just after the October Revolution many people and Jews particularly changed their surnames to „revolutionary sounding". Among popular family names were: Kommissarchik (Commissar), Kommissarov, Oktiabrsky (from month October), Kommunarov. Having a Russian first name helped Jewish children. Anti-Semitism was a government policy but it was not written anywhere. On the contrary, every state document wrote about the equality of all nations and peoples. Having a Russian name helped a Jewish child a lot especially at school and in the streets. If you had Russian name and Jewish surname you were treated often like a Russian. It may sound paradoxical but it also made people doubt about your nationality.

The pattern of the importance of the name for Jewish women does not apply. Why? Women were not figures in worship services (this is historical and may not apply today). They were not called up to the *bima* (pulpit) for

the reading of the Torah or for other religious functions.

This leads to the second question as to why European Jews changed their names over twice as much as those in Asia.

Europe vs. Asia

There are differences in the types of community the two types of Jews had. The Jews in European Russia did not live in Jewish communities. In many ways they were assimilated and had intermarried. Many knew little or nothing about their cultural heritage. Participation in Jewish religious customs such as circumcision, lighting of candles on Friday nights, or having religious marriages was rare. The traditional Ashkenazi practice of naming a child in memory of a deceased relative was followed somewhat as the data seem to imply. However, the data also indicate that in many cases the person named did not know for whom he or she was named.

There is ample evidence of the prejudice that Jews have felt because of their names. Dietz Bering (1987) has done an excellent job documenting the situation in Germany. Didier Lazard (1946) and Nicole Lapierre (1992; 1993) have described the situation in France while there are many studies reported in Lawson (1987, 10-13, 58-61).

The contrast with the Jews in Central Asia is striking. While the sample from European Russia apparently is overwhelmingly Ashkenazi, the sample in Asia seems more oriented toward the Sefardic tradition. The Asian Jews lived in a part of Russia which has a Muslim majority. Different cultural/ ethnic groups had their own communities. Marriage certificates were issued by the rabbi in the synagogue where Jewish names were written in Hebrew. So, Asian Jews had two names, one, Jewish and the second in the vernacular used in Soviet documents and in everyday life. It appears that the Jews there had their own communities and a full religious life without restrictions from the government. So, it can be hypothesized that there was far less pressure on Asian Jews to assimilate.

Social status and age

As Table 2 shows, the majority of people who did the changing is young. Their age is under 30. They compose 66.7% of the total number of changers which was 66. They are children and young people. In a new country, children start speaking the new language and many, if not most, would want their names to also sound new.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Name Changers

Age	N	%
< 10	11	16.7%
11 – 30	33	50.0%
31 – 50	13	19.7%
> 51	9	13.6%
Total	66	100.0%

Original names

Appendix A shows the original names and the new names. About 20% of the original names of the changers are of Jewish origin. In developing the meanings of the names for the three appendices we consulted DUNKLING and GOSLING (1984), HANKS and HODGES (1990), LAWSON (1991) and SIDI (1989). Among them there are clearly biblical names: *Avram (Abraham), David, Dina, Esther, Joseph, Leah, Rachel, Rivka (Rebecca)* and *Sara*. Another group of names are derived from biblical names: *Fira* from Esther, *Isia* from Isaac, *Rachilya* from Rachel, and *Rivkoh* from Rivka. The question might be raised as to why these names although acceptable on religious grounds, were chosen to be changed. We can only speculate that: (1) as in any culture, some people dislike their first names, and, given the opportunity to change, did so, (2) were attached to the more modern Israeli names, or (3) changed on the basis of both these factors.

Eighty percent of the changers had original names which are of non-Jewish origin. According to the Ashkenazi tradition, a newborn is named after a deceased relative. As mentioned above, in the Sefardic tradition, parents name their children either in memory of deceased or in honor of a living relative. Previous generations in both parts of Russia had mainly traditional (biblical) Jewish names. However, the political situation in European Russia made some Jewish people conceal, disguise, or change their names. Parents started giving their children Russian names. But, following the Ashkenazi Jewish tradition, some tried to choose Russian names which were phonetically similar to the name of the deceased relative. For example: *Andrei* from *Aharon, Michael* from *Moshe, Svetlana* from *Sara*, etc. At this point it might be mentioned that although Michael has not historically been a common Jewish name, its choice by Jews seems to have been favorably affected by the Russian milieu where St. Michael is an important figure in the Orthodox Church. Michael also served to disguise a Moshe in the Russian environment.

As Appendix B shows, it is rather striking how many of the Russian names that were changed were saints' names. It seems probable that with pre-1918 Russian Jews, it would have been an anathema for observant Jews to give the name of a Christian saint to a Jewish child. In our sample the name of a Christian saint Ilya was given to Jewish children. *Ilya* is used both by Jews and Russians. *Ilya* is among so called „traditional Church calendar" names. It is a calendar of Christian events and holidays. It also contains names of different ancient individuals who gave their lives or suffered for the Christian religion. These names are considered to be saints' names. Ilya is among them. But historically a great many Jews chose this name for their children because of the influence of Old Testament Elijah. American Jews, while more liberal in this respect, did give names like *Robert* and *William* to children but held back on using the name of a Christian saint like *Stephen* or *Peter* until the 1920s.

Sometimes parents told their children how and why they had been named and sometimes they never mentioned the real facts of the naming. Still other parents gave their children modern and common Russian names not even phonetically related to that of a deceased relative so as not to involve them in conflict with society or the authorities. In this last alternative, the Jewish naming tradition was neglected. Examples of common Russian names used are: *Larisa, Dimitri, Igor, Natasha, Ludmila,* and *Olga.*

Types of name-changing

Upon arrival in Israel, the nationality status situation improved. All immigrants were welcomed with full citizenship. Some immigrants took advantage of the opportunity to restore the lost traditional Jewish name, the name of the person they were named for. So a reverse transformation took place. The types of name change are shown in Tables 3 and 4. Michael became Moshe, Svetlana became Sara, Evgeny became Ephraim. This type of changing composes 24%. It should be noted that „Russian" names were close phonetically to the Hebrew or Yiddish name of a relative. Nevertheless we consider this type of changing as a memorial and not phonetic. People had a change to repatriate their own names and also the names of the relatives they had lost. Appendix C gives background information on the origin of the new name.

The well-known proverb „When in Rome, do as Romans do" perhaps modified to „When in Israel do as Israelis do" proves its vitality in the case of name-changing. Many people simply chose modern Hebrew or traditional Hebrew names instead of Russian ones. Mostly, the changed name is phonetically close to the Russian one. The phonetic type of changing is about 60%. For example, Anna became *Chana* (Hannah), *Helena* became *Ilana, Denis* became *Dani,* and *Marina* became *Michal.*

Table 3: Type of Name Change

	N	%	< 10	Age 11 – 30	31 – 50	> 51
Phonetic	37	56.1%	6	19	6	6
Memorial	16	24.2%	1	10	3	2
„Liked"	10	15.2%	3	2	4	1
Semantic	3	4.5%	1	2	0	0
Total	66	100.0%	11	33	13	9

Table 4: Origin of the New (Changed) Names

	N	%
Traditional Hebrew/Bible	38	57.6%
Modern Hebrew	23	34.8%
Non-Hebrew	3	4.6%
Don't Know	2	3.0%
Total	66	100.0%

Some 4.5% of the changes have semantically similar origins. One example is *Or* or *Orit* from *Svetlana*. Both Or and Svetlana mean „light", one in Hebrew, the other in Russian; *Arye* and *Leonid*, both mean „lion".

Some people having traditional Hebrew names but perhaps somewhat modified by Yiddish changed them to clearly biblical ones: *Fira* from *Esther*, *Yitzhak* (Isaac) from *Isia*, *Rivka* (Rebecca) from *Rivkoh*. In that case, we have not name-changing but rather a name improvement. Others prefer to use modern Hebrew names; they just like *(Dani, Asher, Igal, Gali, Orli, Ilana)*.

The investigation shows that some parents give modern Hebrew names without knowing their meanings. They simply like how these new names sound. Fewer parents choose the name according to the meaning.

Immigration often forces name-changing. As a rule, the young generation changes first names. It is well-known that children and young people are absorbed best of all and feel their alien (foreign) name should not spoil their future. The changed names have mainly traditional (biblical) Hebrew or modern Hebrew origins which is quite reasonable for people

living in Israel. However, traditional Hebrew names prevail. It can be explained by the fact that mainly young generation change first names. The Jewish tradition of naming a child after a deceased relative is also observed in name-changing. Phonetic and memorial types of changing predominate.

Discussion and Conclusions

Now we have the task of reconciling the different aspects of the data presented. We have tried to integrate the various factors into one diagram in Figure 1. Here we have tried to show how the various forces have come together to produce a name change.

What we are postulating is a reidentification or, perhaps, reindividuation. We suggest there was among the European Russian Jews a dormant or latent identification with the Ashkenazi tradition that was repressed or suppressed, that when the opportunity presented itself, the old cultural-religious tradition emerged.

This pattern may not be as unusual as it may sound at first. If we look at other cultures, we may see similar dynamics at work. Peter MCGUIGAN (1984) has described a large family, originally from Ireland, that emigrated to Prince Edward Island, Canada in the 19th century. Under English pressure in Ireland, they had changed McGuigan (which had a Gaelic root) to the more British, Goodwin. However, away from English influence and in Canada, they changed the name back to the original McGuigan.

Alex HALEY (1976) in his well-known „Roots" traced a black family back to Africa. This brought about awakened interest in African names on the part of American blacks. Some American blacks changed their names completely, i.e., Cassius Clay to Mohammed Ali (often with a change to the Muslim religion) but others changed only the first name. Still others began to use African names in naming a new baby.

Another example is with a different cultural group, Ukrainians in Manitoba. Iraida Tarnawecka (1984) found in her research over three generations, cases where the first generation in Canada changed the surname to an Anglo-Saxon one, but the third generation went back to the Ukrainian, ex., Wasiliw > Williamson >Wasiliw.

A final case is the more recent report by Scott Baird (1994). His data covered 150 years and shows that diacritic markings which were originally given up returned in the fourth generation this reestablishing the Hispanic identity.

Thus, we have four other examples, Irish, American black, Ukrainian, and Hispanic, of groups that have returned to their cultural identity. The

phenomenon of European Russian Jews going back to their cultural roots is not isolated, it is one more example of ethnic groups trying to reestablish their cultural identity.

Author Note

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2. A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the American Name Society in 1994.

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Appendix A: Name Changes

Original Name Changed Name

Albert	>	Avner	Ludmila	>	Leah
Alexander	>	Isra/Ezra	Marina	>	Michal
Alexey	>	Alex	Michael	>	Moshe – 2 cases
Andrei	>	Aharon	Natasha	>	Nataly
Anna	>	Chana (Hannah)	Oleg	>	Alex
Anna	>	Anat	Oleg	>	Gai
Arkady	>	Yisrael	Olga	>	Orli
Arsen	>	Asher	Olga	>	Ella
Artem	>	Ariel	Pavel	>	Shaul
Asir	>	Asher	Peter	>	Rafi
Boris	>	Benjamin	Rachilya	>	Rachel
Danil	>	Daniel – 2 cases	Rivkoh	>	Riva
Denis	>	Dani	Semen	>	Sami
Dimitri	>	Dani	Semion	>	Shimon
Dimitri	>	David	Sergei	>	Shahar
Djora	>	Dani	Stanislav	>	Asher
Yelena/Elena	>	Ilana – 2 cases	Susana	>	Shoshana
Ephim	>	Haim/Chaim	Svetlana	>	Sara
Esther	>	Eti	Svetlana	>	Or
Evgeni	>	Avi	Svetlana	>	Ora
Evgeni	>	Dani	Tsalya	>	Betzalel
Evgeni	>	Ephraim	Vadim	>	Dani
Evgeni	>	Gal	Vladimir	>	Ze'ev
Georgi	>	Jurai	Yehuda	>	Uri
Helena	>	Ilana – 2 cases	Zina	>	Ziva
Igor	>	Igal – 2 cases	Zolya	>	Yisrael
Ilia/Ilya	>	Eli			
Irina	>	Irene			
Irina	>	Orna			
Irina	>	Ita			
Larisa	>	Liora			
Leonid	>	Arye			
Leonid	>	Leon			
Lubov	>	Leah			

Appendix B: Language origins of original name

Name   Origin

Alexander   Russian < Greek „protector of men".
Alexey   Affectionate form of Alexander.
Anna   Russian < Greek form of the Hebrew name *Chana* but
            probably associated by most Russians with the Virgin Mary.
Arkady   Greek *Arkadios*, referring to a region in Greece. Popularity
            in Russia due to St. Arkadios , 4th cent. bishop.
Arsen   Russian < Greek, short form of *Arsenios* („brave, coura-
            geous"), < St. Arsenius the Great, 5th cent.
Artem   Russian < Greek, „devotee of the goddess Artemis",
            associated with a character in a letter of St. Paul in the New
            Testament.
Asir   Form of the Hebrew *Asher*, „lucky, fortunate".
Boris   Russian, „battle glory, fighting warrior". Name of a 10th
            cent. Russian saint.
Danil   form of the Hebrew *Daniel* „God is my judge", Bible figure.
Denis   Russian < Greek, but *Dionysios*, orig. a follower of the Greek
            god but associated with a 3rd cent. saint.
Dimitri   Russian < Greek, Dēmētrios <, Dēmētēr, Greek goddess.
            Demetrius was a 4th century saint Greek, who was martyred.
Djora   Form of Modern Hebrew „convert" after Simeon Bar Giora,
            name of a leader in the revolt against Rome. His father was
            a convert.
Ephim   Hebrew < *Ephraim* „fruitful". Son of Joseph, grandson of
            Jacob.
Esther   Hebrew < Persian „star". Bible figure.
Evgeni   Russian < Greek *Eugenios* „noble". Popularity in Russian
            traced to 4th cent. missionary bishop.
Georgi   Russian < Greek *Georgios* „farmer". Legend of a dragon
            slayer. Regarded as an important saint in the Orthodox
            Church.
Helena   See: Yelena.
Igor   Russian form of Scand. *Ivor* „bow warrior".
Ilia/Ilya   Russian form of Hebrew *Elijah* „the Lord is my God".
Irina   Russian < Greek *eirēnē* „peace". Name of several saints in
            the Orthodox Church. Very popular name in Russia.
Larisa   Russian origin not clear. Name of a Greek martyr venerated

	by the Orthodox Church.
Leonid	Russian < Greek *Leonidas* „lion". Name of two Orthodox saints.
Lubov	Russian „love".
Ludmila	Russian < Old Slavonic „people with grace". Bohemian siant who was martyred in the 10th cent..
Marina	Possibly derived from Latin *Marius*. Another widely-held view is that it means „of the sea". Possible popularity of this name in Russia may be the influence of Princess Marina of Greece.
Michael	Hebrew „Who is like God". An archangel. Also an important religious figure in Christianity. While a Jewish name originally was not commonly used by Jews in Russia.
Natasha	Russian form from Late Latin < Natālia < *Natālis (diēs)* „birthday of the Lord", i.e., Christmas. Associated with a 4th cent. saint.
Oleg	Russian form of Scand. *Helge,* originally meant „prosperous", later came to mean „holy". Name not approved by Orthodox Church.
Olga	Russian female equivalent of Oleg. But, unlike Olga was approved by Orthodox Church because of St. Olga of Kiev, a 10th cent. saint.
Pavel	Russian form of Latin *paulus* „small". Name associated with St. Paul.
Rachilya	Russian – Yid. form of the Hebrew *Rachel* „ewe". Wife of Jacob.
Rivkoh	Russian – Yid. form of *Rivka* (Rebecca). One common explanation of the meaning is „noose". Wife of Isaac.
Semion	Russian form of Simeon < Hebrew „to hear, reputation". 2nd son of Jacob. Also associated with several New Testament figures. Whether this name chosen for its Old Testament connection, its New, or even whether the individuals involved even knew about its religious associations is not clear.
Sergei	Russian from a Roman family name. Meaning uncertain. Associated with St. Sergius of Radonezh, famous 14th cent. Russian saint
Stanislav	Slavic"? + glory". St. Stanislaus (Pol. form), 11th cent. saint was bishop of Cracow.
Susanna(h)	New testament form of Hebrew *Shoshana* „lily". Also, figure in apocryphal book.

Svetlana	< Slavonic translation of the Greek *Phōtinē* „light". St. Photine was a martyred saint. Is also associated with a figure in Ch. 4. Book of St. John.
Tsalya	Form of *Betzalel* „under God's shadow". Bible figure.
Vadim	Russian uncertain origin. May be a form of Vladimir.
Vladimir	< Old Slavonic „world ruler". Important 10th – 11th cent. saint who brought Russia into Christianity.
Yehuda	Hebrew, „praise". 4th son of Jacob. English form is Judah.
Yelena	Russian < Greek, form of *Hēlēnē* „the bright one, the shining one". Associated with St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine.
Zina	Short form of Russian < Greek *Zēnais* < Zeus. Name of 1st cent. martyred saints of the Orthodox Church. May also be a short form of Zinovia, also a saint martyred in 3[td] cent.
Zolya	Russian – Yid. form of Hebrew Shlomoh (Solomon).
Zoya	Uncertain.

Appendix C: Meaning and language origin of new names

Name	Origin
A(h)aron	Hebrew, brother of Moses: high priest. Genesis.
Alex	Short form of Alexander.
Anat	Modern Hebrew. Orig. a Canaanite goddess. Now a feminine name.
Ariel/Arel	Modern Hebrew, „lion of God". Grandson of Jacob. Son of Gad. Genesis.
Arye	Hebrew, „lion". Bible. An officer. 2 Kings.
Asher	Hebrew. Son of Jacob. Genesis.
Avi	Hebrew, „my father".
Avner	Hebrew, „father of light". A general. I Samuel.
Benjamin	Hebrew, „son of my right hand". Youngest son of Jacob. Genesis.
Betzalel	Hebrew. A craftsman. Exodus.
Chana	Hebrew, „grace". Mother of Samuel. I Samuel.
Dani	Hebrew. Affectionate form of Dan. See: Daniel, below.
Daniel	Hebrew, „God is my judge". Hero of the Book of Daniel
David	Hebrew, „beloved". 2nd king of Israel. I Samuel, Kings.
El(l)a	Modern Hebrew, „terebinth tree" or „goddess".
Eli	Hebrew, „the most high". High priest. I Samuel.
Ephraim	Hebrew, „fruitful". Son of Joseph. Genesis.
Eti	Short form of Hebrew. Esther < Persian, „star". Book of Esther.
Gai	Modern Hebrew, „gorge".
Gal	Modern Hebrew, „wave". Used as a male and female name.
Haim	Hebrew, „life".
Igal	Modern Hebrew, „God will redeem". One of Moses' 12 scouts. Numbers.
Ilana	Modern Hebrew, „tree". Female name.
Izra/Ezra	Hebrew, „help". Bible figure. Priest and scribe,. Book of Ezra.
Ita	Form of Esther. See: Eti, above.
Jurai	Do not know
Leah	Hebrew, „to be weary". First wife of Jacob. Genesis.
Leeon	Modern Hebrew, „my strength". Used as a male and female name. Not to be confused with Leon which has different root.

Leeora/Liora Modern Hebrew, „my light".
Michal   Modern Hebrew, „who is like God?". Daughter of Shaul
             (Saul). One of David's wifes. I Samuel.
Moshe   Hebrew, „drawn out of the water". Major leader. Exodus.
Nataly   Modern Hebrew, „he gave me".
Or   Modern Hebrew, „light".
Ora   Modern Hebrew form of Or.
Orli   Modern Hebrew, „you are my light". Female name.
Orna   Modern Hebrew, „pine tree". Female name.
Rachel   Hebrew, „ewe". Second wife of Jacob. Genesis.
Rafi   Modern Hebrew, nickname < Raphael, „God has healed".
             Angel of healing. Also a figure in I Chronicles.
Riva   Hebrew, „maiden, lass". According to Sidi, Sometimes used
             as a modern form of Rivka. See: Rivkoh, Appendix B.
Sami   Do not know.
Shimon   Hebrew. See: Semion, Appendix B.
Shahar   Modern Hebrew, „dawn". Used as a male and female name.
Sarah   Hebrew, „princess". Wife of Abraham. Genesis.
Shaul/Saul   Hebrew, „asked, borrowed". First King of Israel. I Samuel.
Shoshana   Hebrew, „lily". Book of Daniel.
Uri   Hebrew, „my light, my flame". A leader. Exodus.
Yisrael   Hebrew, „wrestled with God". Jacob's name after struggle
             with God. Genesis.
Ze'ev   Hebrew, „wolf". Jacob compared Benjamin to a wolf. Gen-
             esis.
Ziva(h)   Modern Hebrew, „light, brilliance".

Hypothesized name change factors

Name Changes

Origin of the new name

Traditional Hebrew (Bibliocal)

Hebrew Modern

Semantic

Phonetic

Memorial

"Liked"

Types of changing

Hebrew

Non Hebrew

Origin of the original name

Person's data

Education

Occupation

Sex

Age

Residence in the former Soviet Union

Central Asia

Europe