



Evolution of Algerian's Given Names Referring to Arabic Plant Names

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Abstract

The Arabic personal name meaning can be classified into several categories, those related to nature, plants or agriculture are common in the Algerian anthroponymy. The naming of the newborn is the duty of the parents who must choose a good, blissful, shining name, specific to the newborn's gender. This paper aims to evaluate how much the names related to floriculture are commonly used and constant in generations. In this paper we examined the evolution of given names of Algerian people. The analyzed sample was the lists of names of persons (male and female) of three generations: old people, youth and kids. To estimate the frequency of those given names we examine about 1206 names of lecturers, students and pupils. The obtained results show that the given names referring to floriculture are about 45 plants in Algerian anthroponymy, females are named more than male names referring to Arabic plant names. There are common names found in the 3 generations (the case of Zahra (*Citrus* sp.) an aromatic plant, Nesrine (*Rosa canina*) an ornamental plant), other classic names (the case of Khoukha (*Prunus persicae*) a fruit tree) and modern (the case of Bailassan (*Sambucus nigra*) a medicinal plant. According to Algerian beliefs, the floriculture species that around a person make it inspirational, that the people use one plant name, or a combination of names as given names for a newborn.

Key words : Given names, floriculture, Algerian beliefs , medicinal plant, aromatic plant.

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1. Introduction

As the first step for the good education of their children, parents must choose a newborn a given name with good and blissful meaning, permissible, it refers of the gender of the newborn. The best names are those that are meaningful, Islamic, and pleasant to hear. The importance of giving beautiful names to the children can be estimated from the fact that the Islamic Shari'ah prescribes special norms for naming the Muslim children (Hareeri, 2009). Ugly, disgusting, ridiculous and negative

names are not allowed (Rahman, 2013), Alzumor (2009), explained that the name describes an event, environment or familial situation during the birth. This given name for the owner, hides at the same time a story and a hope to hold one trait of the given name. Baiyewu et al, (2005) and Krisanapook et al (2019), considered the presence of the plant in an environment to be inviting and fascinating for people. This attraction to plants is reflected in their use as personal names. Some previous studies carried out in the Arabic's Anthroponymy

discipline, demonstrate that there are categories of classification of personal naming: those related to the religion (Rahman, 2013, Yermèche, 2013,) or to the socio-culture of the authors (Alzumor, 2009, Amara and Ledada, 2013, Alzamil, 2020) , the giver of the personal name of the newborn choose either a location, a time of birth or related to the nature (an animal, a bird, a precious rock or a plant). Worldwide, there are persons whose given names refer to a kind of flower or plant: Jasmine and Yasmine, Rose, Marguerite, Olivia, Oliver etc. the website visited and the dictionary of names meaning, explain the meaning of given names listed in this study, also indicate the origin of some names (Can be Persian, Turc, Hindi or from old Egypt). From this classification used by Anthroponyms, studying the given names whose meaning is a name of the plant, we started our study.

Research question

How many plants are auspicious in the Algerian culture when they are used as personal names for the newborn?

Is the use of plant names in Algerian beliefs dependent on gender and age?

2. Material and Methods

In this paper, we investigate the Algerian given names of both genders that refer to the floriculture (medicinal, aromatic, ornamental plant and fruit tree).

2.1. Collection of Data

Data were collected from given names of different generations: through conversations with elderly women, names of relatives, colleagues, even old schoolmates, or names that the meaning is a name of the plant in Arabic language, names heard during our travels between some regions of the country. The analyzed names of 3 people generations: Generation of elderly people, generation of youths and generation of kids. Interviewing some old people (from Algiers /Biskra) about how the names are given to a newborn when

they are young (more than 50 years old) was necessary because naming using such names in our days is rare, only people from the same generation can confirm the existence of such « outdated » given name. The corresponding plant species used as given names were confirmed using encyclopedias, scientific articles and internet sites, written in Arabic (the language of the analyzed lists), or those written in French or English.

For each plant, we give:

- The type of floriculture, the part of the plant that refers to the given name
- The Latin name, botanic family name
- The English name
- The Arabic name
- Another meaning of the Arabic name

2.2. The frequency of names referring to plant names in the sample

The analyzed sample:

- Teachers' names of primary schools (Algiers/ Algeria), informants' names from previous investigations (Biskra district /Algeria) (to collect names above 40 years old), or interviewing old people about the naming of persons related to plant names.
- University students list (Department of Agronomics Sciences, University of Biskra) to collect their youth names (18-30 years old). The lists are from the academic year 2014/2015 to 2023/2024.
- Pupils list from the primary schools (Algiers/ Algeria) for the kids (6 to 12 years old). The lists are from the academic years 2019/2020 to 2021/2022.

These lists were used to evaluate the frequency of given names (a total of 1206 names), to distinguish between classic and modern names, and plant names used for the female gender and male gender. Using the Excel soft word, we analyzed the frequency of given names.

3. Results and discussion

This study allowed us to list 46 plants: The plants belong to 28 botanical families; To read the table, the collected names are grouped into 4 speculations: medicinal, aromatic ornamental plants, and fruit trees (Table 1). Given names of the female gender are more frequent than the male gender (45 plant names vs 15 plant names).

a. One species refers to more than one given name:

One plant can have multiple Arabic given names, depending on the stage of life of the plant or the part of the plant, which can explain the importance of this species. In the case of the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera* L), **Nakhela** refers to the adult productive tree, **Djebara** or **Lyna** refers to the young date palm, and **Tamara** / **Tamer** refer to the date fruit. For the same plant's name, we use the single or the plural or even shrinking meaning in the case of *Rosa*: **Warda** (one rose)/**Ouroud** (many roses)/ **Ourida** (small rose), note only that we use even different varieties names of *Rosa*. This derivate of Ouarda shows Bouabid and Habel (2017) is frequent during generations (the period 1962-1992) in the Bouira region (Noth of Algeria)

b. Combination of two given names related to plant's names

From the analyzed lists, we can have a combination of two floral names example of **Lyna Yasmine**, **Chadha Rayhane**. The most common typology of names in the studied sample is one-word names, less common two-word names, and rarely found three-word names, instead explains Abdellah (2019), the combination of two or three-word names is common in Bruneian Malays' personnel names. Compared to Taibi-Maghraoui (2021), the combination of names in Algeria is used when we give the female baby (or male) the grandmother's (or grandfather's) given name we add a second

given name modern like **Yamina Lilia**, **Khadija Yasmine**.

The combination of names is common in Arabic Onomastics, for example: **Fatima Zahra** the name of the youngest daughter of the Prophete **Mohamed** (Pray and Peace be on him), **Zahra** (زهراء) when translated in Dictionary of Hareeri (2009) is "a Flower", but also for Muslim people, it means: bloom, beautiful lady and the title of **Fatima**.

c. Given names related to plant description

Other names describe a plant (or a part of the plant) without the precision of the species; those names can refer to the flower's smell, its colour or the grassland, the meaning of those names is verified in the Arabic Dictionary of names of Elhaye (2003), and the Dictionary of Islamic names of Hareeri (2009) and the web sites of Arabic names meaning (Table 2).

d. Modern and classic given names

As a result of the interview with a lady (born in 1964) from Guarta village (34.79594612611777, 5.94996493294996) (Annexe 01), standing in her home garden (containing some date palms, fig trees, olive trees, henna shrub, Orange and Citrus trees, Mulberry tree, Rose shrub, a grape shrub, pomegranate tree, and some herbaceous plant Menths, she listed some of the female given names of her generation that are related to plant names.

Confirmed the cited name with another old woman (born in 1941) from Sidi Khelil village (34.84152273817444, .877284157771732). Those names that were famous during her childhood are in our days rare female given names (**Aarara**, **Chiha**, **Djebara**, **Khedaoudj**, **Khoukha**, **Leloucha**, **Naanaa**, **Roumana**, **Toufaha**, **Touta**) or male given names (**Kharoubi**, **Zitouni**, **Elouardi**).

Table 1. The most common Algerian given names to both genders related to medicinal

Speculation / Family name	Latin name	Arabic female given name	Plant/ a part of the plant	Arabic given names	Other meaning*	English name	References
Aromatic plants							
Labiatae / Lamiaceae	<i>Lavandula officinalis</i>	Khouzama خزامة	Aerial part	-	-	Lavender	21
	<i>Melissa officinalis</i>	Melissa مليسا	Aerial part			Common balm	21
	<i>Mentha sativa</i>	Naanaa نعناعة	Aerial part			Mint	21
	<i>Salvia officinalis</i>	Selma سالمة سلمى	Leaves	-	-	Common sage	10, 14
Lauraceae	<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Renda رندى / رندا	Leaves	-	-	Sweet Bay	10
	<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Rinad رناد	Leaves	-	-	Sweet Bay	10
Medicinal plant							
Asteraceae	<i>Artemisia herba alba</i>	Chiha شبيحة	Aerial part	Bou Chiha بو شبيحة		White Worm wood	21
Balsaminaceae	<i>Impatiens balsamina</i>	Balsem بلسم	Aerial part			Garden balsam	10
Caprifoliaceae	<i>Sambiscus nigra</i>	Bailaçon بيلسان	Flower	-	-	Black elder	10, 21
Caryophyllaceae	<i>Spergularia rubra</i>	Cherifa شريفية	Aerial part	Cherif شريف	Honest	Red sand spurrey	10
Cucurbitaceae	<i>Citrilluscolocynthus</i>	-	Fruit	Aalkama علقمة	-	Bitter apple	21
Cupressaceae	<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i>	Aaraara عرعارة	Aerial part	-	-	-	21
Labiatae /	<i>Myrtus</i>	Rihana ريحانة	Aerial part	-	-	Common myrtle	3, 10

Lamiaceae	<i>communis</i>						
	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	Rihana ريحانة	Aerial part	-	-	Sweet basil	20
Lythraceae	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i>	Tamer hena تمر حنة	Fruit	-	-	Henna tree	21
Poaceae	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>	Saida سعيدة	Aerial part	Saad سعد	Happiness	Nutgrass	21
Rhamnaceae	<i>Ziziphus jujube</i>	Sedra سدري / سدرا	Aerial part	-	Place in heaven	Christ thorn jujube	3
Verbenaceae	<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Louiza لويزة	Aerial part	-	Piece of gold	Lemon verbena	21
Fruit tree							
Arecaceae	<i>Pheonix dactylifera</i>	Nakhela نخلة	Hole plant	-	-	Date palm	3
	<i>Pheonix dactylifera</i>	Lyna ليني/لينة	Young plant	-	-	Date palm	
	<i>Pheonix dactylifera</i>	Tamara تمارا	Fruit	Tamer ثامر ثامر	Fruity	Date palm	17
Fabaceae	<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	-	Fruit	Kharoubi خروبى	colour	Carob	14,21
Lythraceae	<i>Punica granatum</i>	Romana رمانة	Fruit/tree			Pomegranate	21
Moraceae	<i>Merus nigra</i>	Touta توتة	Fruit	-	-	Mulberry	21
	<i>Ficus carica</i>	Tina تينة	Hole tree			Fig	3, 21
Musaceae	<i>Muza paradisiacal</i>		Fruit	Talha طلحة		Banana	
Oleaceae	<i>Olea europea</i>	-	Fruit	Zitouni زيتونى	-	Olive	14, 21
Rosaceae	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Toufaha تفاحة	Fruit	-	-	Apple	21
	<i>Prunus persicae</i>	Khoukha خوخة	flower/fruit	-	-	Peach	21
Rutaceae	<i>Citrus</i>	Zahra/ Zahira/	Flower	Zohir/lazhar	Flowers	Orange, lemon	10

		Zehour زهرة / زهيرة / زهور		/ لزهري / لزهاري / lazhari			
Vitaceae	<i>Vitis venifera</i>	Dalia دالية	Hole plant	-	-	Grapevine	17
Ornamental plant							
Amaryllidaceae	<i>Narcissus</i>	Nardjis نرجس	Flower	-	-	Primrose peerless	21
Asteraceae	<i>Calandula officinalis</i>	Leloucha للوشة	Flower	-	-	Marigold	10
Geraniaceae	<i>Pelagronium graveolens</i>	Aatra عطرة	Aerial part	-	-	Pelargonium	21
	<i>Pelagronium graveolens</i>	Khedawdj خداج	Aerial part	-	-	Pelargonium	10
Geraniaceae	<i>Majorana syriaca</i>	-	Aerial part	Zaater زعتر	-	Wild thyme	21
Iridaceae	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Sawsen سوسن	Aerial part	-	-	Madonna lily	21
Labiatae	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	-	Aerial part	Zaater زعتر	-	Thyme	14
Liliaceae	<i>Lilium candidum</i>	Lilia/lyly ليليا/ليلي		-	-	Madonna lily	21
Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia arabia</i>	-	Aerial part	Aanbar عنبر	-	Needle bush	21
Oleaceae	<i>Jasminum officinalis</i>	Yasmine / ياسمين / ياسمينية / yasmina	Flowers	-	-	Jasmin	21
	<i>Jasmanussa mbac</i>	Foula/ Fela فلة	Flower	-	-	Jasmin of poetry	21
Portulacaceae	<i>Portulaca oleacea</i>	-	Areal part	Hamza حمزة	Lion	Garden purslane	8
Rosaceae	<i>Rosa</i>	Warda/wouroud/Wardia/	Flower	Elwardi الوردي	colour	Rose	21

		wrida /ورود/ وردة وردية/اوريدة					
	<i>Rosa canina</i>	Nesrine نسرين	Flower	-	-	Dog rose	3
	<i>Rosa gallica</i>	Jouri/ jouria /جوري/ جورية	Flower	-	-	Rose	21
Shalicaceae	<i>Populus sp</i>	Hour حور	Aerial part	-	-	-	15
Styracaceae	<i>Styrax officinalis</i>	Loubna لبنى	Aerial part	-	-	Styrax	21
Verbenaceae	<i>Lantana camara</i>	Oum keltoum أم كلثوم	Aerial part	-	A woman with big cheek	Red sage/Spanish flag	21
Nymphaeaceae	<i>Nymphaea lotus</i>	Hadjer هاجر	Flower	-	Emigrate	White Egyptian lotus	

Table 2. Names referring to a character of the plants

Female names	Male names	Meaning of the name
Aabir عبير		Flower's smell
Afnan أفنان		Green Leahy branches
Djana جنة / جنى		Heaven / Fruit's harvest
Djanete جنات		Heavens
Khadra خضرة	Lakhder/Elkhidher لخضر/ الخضر	Grass / even green tree/ greenery
Mouroudj مروج	Riyadh رياض	Grasslands
Noura/ نورة Nawara/ نواره	Naouri/ Nawar النوار/ النوري	Clusters of flower/ efflorescence
Orwa / Arwa أروى		Even green tree
Zayneb زينب		Tree with fragrant flower

The authors Alzamor (2009), Aljabour (2019) Alzamil (2020), Alswaheli (2022), explain that there is an introduction of foreign names in the new generation from different foreign origins, we have the same phenomena in given names from other languages related to the plant names the case of **Kamelia** كامليا (*Camellia sinensis syn Thea sinensis*, the tea plant), **Julnar** جُلنار (*Punica granatum*, the flower of pomegranate) and **Rosa** رُوزا (*Rosa sp*), and **Mayar** ميار (Rose of paradise).

From this table (table 03) we observe that the given name Zahra or Fatima Zahra is the most frequent as a female name, the same result is obtained according to Rahman (2013), Amara and Ledada (2013) and Taibi-Meghraoui (2021). There are 5 plant names conserved between the 3 generations, from 8 to 11 plant names conserved between two successive generations. Comparing our findings with those of other communities;

Almeakaoui from Qatar analyzed 4469 female given names of students from his university during the academic year 1994/1995, distributed among 430 names. The names referring to plant names represent only 4% of his sample. The listed names are all most the same as Algeria's female given names, except names that are not commonly used in our study like **Mouza** موزة (**Banana**), **Djouza** جوزة (**Walnut**), **Ghousna/ Ghosoun**, غصون/ غصنة (**Branch/ Branches**).

In the same study, from a sample of 1715 given names, the male given names related to nature were only those of wild animals or birds. Aljabour (2019), confirms that names can be given relating to nature in Jordan (the case of Beni Sakhr tribe), about those related to plant he listed 06 female names that are common with our findings: **Zehour, Yasmin, Wouroud, Narjis, Sawsan, Baylasan** and

Khuzamah. When Alzamil (2020) listed more female names from Saudi: **Khuzamah, Leena, Narjis, Nesreen, Rayhana, Renad, Sawsan, Wardah** and **Yasmin**.

In the investigated sample of Alzamor (300 female names from Yeman), the names related to agriculture and environment are ranked in first position, most of those names are different from our findings, even the author described them as strange names (for readers) but common in the studied area: **Nabata** نباتة, **Aanaba** عنبية, **Bakela** بقلّة, **Hylah** هيلة, **Qoota** قوطة, **Senboula** سنبلّة, **Qirfa** فرفة, **Zaitouna**, زيتونة only **Nakhela** and **Toufaha** are common between his and this investigation.

e. Female-given names vs male given names referring to Arabic plant names

The frequency of given names related to plant's name is about 10 %, from the analyzed sample, distributed between genders and 03 generations (figure 01), the number of female names is 85 % (all the female names from the Table 29 plant names) vs. 17 % of male given names (**Hamza 5, Lakhder 2, Zohir 2, Anouar 1, Benchiha 1, Zitouni 2**) When we compare between two genders names using the frequency, the female given name represents 90 % of total person named with Arabic plant names.

Djebbas (2005), shows that the names that referred to nature and some of its aspects differed in terms of frequency in the study sample (the city of Constantine), where it ranked 4th in the classification among females, with a percentage of 10 %, all names full of fragrance, beauty, scents and goodness, whereas for male names the frequency of appearance of names related to nature especially plant names is less common (she listed names of wild animals that reflect the strength and the courage).

Table 3. List of females given names depending on generations

	Female given name kids	Frequency	Female given name youth	Frequency	Female given name old people	Frequency
1.	Fatima Zahra	5	Fatima Zahra	11	Fatima zahra	2
2.	Hadjer	5	Hadjer	5	Hadjer	1
3.	Warda	1	Warda	5	/	/
4.	Lylia	4	Lylia	8	/	/
5.	Lyna	3	Lyna	1	/	/
6.	Nesrine	5	Nesrine	3	Nesrine	2
7.	Selma	2	Selma	6	/	/
8.	Zahra	2	Zahra	3	Zahra	5
9.	Zaineb	2	Zaineb	4	/	/
10.	Rayhana	1	Rayhana	1	Rayhana	1
11.	Yasmine	3	Yasmine	2	/	/
12.	Aabir	2	Aatra	2	Aatra	2
13.	Djouri	1	Khadra	1	Khadra	2
14.	Foula	1	khedaoudj	1	/	/
15.	Kamelia	1	Loubna	4	/	/
16.	Melissa	3	Louiza	2	/	/
17.	Sedra	1	Lyly	1	/	/
18.	/	/	Nardjis	1	/	/
19.	/	/	Naoura	1	Naoura	1
20.	/	/	Oum Keltoum	1	Naouara	2
21.	/	/	Rinda	3	/	/
22.	/	/	Sawsen	1	/	/
	Σ	40		66		18
	Mean	2,5		3,14285714		2
	Standard deviation	1,54919334		2,66993847		1,30930734

When examining the names collected in our study, it becomes clear that a single name can be classified, at the same time, under two categories: names related to nature and names related to religion. Most of the proper names mentioned in Table 1 are either a name mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (Tyn تين, Warda وردة, Akhder أحضر, Talhe طلح, Rayhan ريحان, Riyadh رياض, Djana جنى, Afnane أفنان ...), a name of members of the House of Prophethood (Fatima Zahra فاطمة الزهراء, zayneb زينب, oumkelthouم كلثوم) or a name of one of the Companions (Hamza حمزة,

Talha طلحة, Zohir زهير). A name with a disgraceful meaning for a child explained by Touati and Hassini (2021), has negative effects on the child's psyche, which may lead him to abandon studies and social gatherings for fear of calling him by his disgraceful name or nickname. Indeed, a name with good meaning makes the person more confident the case of students introducing themselves during the first contact with the lecturer, some of them explain the meaning of his or her given name, in the case the name is cited in Holy Coran He/she mentions a verse from the Qur'anic surah.

4. Conclusion

We can conclude from this investigation that the plants have had an important value in the Algerian culture since the immortal time if we can classify the given names between classic (**Aarara, Chiha** female given name for women aged more than 40 years) vs. Modern (**Bailassan, Melissa** female given name for girl aged more than 6 years), some given names they don't lose their position the case of **Zahra, Warda** female given names or, **Hamza** male given name. The Arabic given names could be common in Arabic countries and at the same time rare in Algeria, the opposite is true.

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Author Contribution

Keltoum Benaissa conceived and designed the study, and analyzed the data obtained. Keltoum Benaissa drafted this paper and interviewed people from some villages of Biskra.

Conflicts of Interest

Author declares no conflicts of interests.

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