THE NICKNAME – SANCTION OR DENOMINATIVE METHOD*

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Abstract: Anthroponymy, similar to toponymy, is the mirror within the society. A mirror in which the image can often be reflected in a distorted way: the filter of consciousness, culture and imagination of naming often leaves its mark on the "products" of the denominative process. An example of this is the name of the person that originates from descriptive nicknames, as these always appear as sentences pronounced in the light of the evaluation and reasoning of the others.

The acceptance of diversity, and the tolerance (including the denominative tolerance) did not represent, more than a century ago (the period of formation and crystallization of the official family name system) a feature of our old community, especially in the village, which has always sanctioned (sometimes also out of a desire to correct) what did not fit into the patterns of its normality. Any physical or behavioural "deviation" from the "norm" of the community members had denominational consequences. As a result, an impressive number of anthroponyms today come from ancient physical and mental traits/faults. Upon exhaustive research, we could even reconstruct, through these names, the clinical picture of the old Romanian society. In this paper, however, we will limit ourselves to presenting those nicknames that sanction vices of thought, positioning ourselves, semantically, in the sphere of appellations *fool* and *stupid*. We will analyze here anthroponyms based on various words with that meaning, for example, *Bălgunea* (balga, balgan – "netot - silly"), *Bolândău* (bolând – "idiot, stupid"), *Bondrea* (bondră – "silly woman, who is good for nothing"), *Captiu* (*capchiu,* variant of *capiu* "bewildered, confused"), etc., but also the announced generics.

Keywords: anthroponymy, nickname, sanction, psychic traits.

The nicknames are those names that have a motivated and affective character and illustrate physical, mental, linguistic, geographical features, etc. or memorable events in the lives of their wearers, based, most of the times, on a metaphor created

especially from and for amusement. They were used "to enhance the defects or the inappropriate behaviour"[1] of the community members that were not appreciated. And, Aureliu Candrea continues, "the people, if they find in a person a certain imperfection and give them the nickname that characterizes that imperfection well, the nickname is preserved and then applied to all persons with the same defect"[2].

Much has been written about the nickname over time, the bibliography referring to this anthroponymic category being extremely thick. We encounter two main directions as far as it is concerned; thus, there are authors who consider that the nickname has only affective value and that its appearance should not be sought in the absence of terms of identification of the individuals[3]; others, on the contrary, believe that the nicknames have, first of all, the role of individualizing or removing anthroponymic homonymy and only then the role of a satire.

Aureliu Candrea is also the first to say that when the nickname is repeated by speakers, referring to the same person, it turns into a surname. From that moment on, a distinction is made, between nickname and appellation, and an attempt was made to distribute the functions performed by each of the two categories: thus, it was considered that "the necessity of using the term surname is dictated by the fact that it has an exclusively anthroponymic function, while the nickname indicates a semantic function"[4].

Most specialized works condition the transformation of the nickname into an appellation by losing that affective, ironic feature, thus creating the possibility of taking over the name by other members of that person's family, but who do not have that feature. In other researches, the semantic content of the two also differs: nicknames originate mainly from a defect, while appellations are based on a profession, social situation, place of origin, etc. and do not disturb by highlighting certain particularities of the person in case.

Many times, however, the attempts to define the two categories have created more confusion, because the authors used the both terms in the same statement: the nickname is an appellation…, or the appellation is a nickname…

Wishing to eliminate the confusions created in defining the nickname and the appellation, Teodor Oancă finds the solution to introduce the term "complementary name" into the formula. In this way, the definitions of the two notions become clear: the nicknames are those complementary names that belong to the field of affect, being characterized by an ironic or sarcastic nuance, as a result of the desire to ridicule various defects, and the appellation is the complementary name assigned to a person who, by taking it over by his collaterals or descendants, functions as an

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[1] Aureliu Candrea, *Poreclele la români,* Bucharest, Socec Bookshop Press, 1895, p. 7.

[2] *Ibidem,* p. 10.

[3] In small communities (especially in villages), it often happens that several people bear the same first name or surname. In these cases, the use of the nickname eliminates the homonymy.

[4] Ştefan Paşca, *Nume de persoane şi nume de animale în Ţara Oltului,* Bucharest, 1936, p. 44.

unofficial surname[5]. The idea is that any nickname can become, at some point, an appellation, but not every appellation originated from a nickname, it can be based on ethnic, hypocoristic names, names given by ranks, titles, professions, social status, local origin.

Around the 2000s, the discussions around the nickname began to take place from a psycholinguistic and psychosocial point of view. It is investigated the manner the nickname is born, and, it is found that, in its attribution, a series of complex psychic processes take place, in which the perception plays an important role; therefore, nicknames are the result of psycholinguistic processes that engage the factors that compete to create and fix it: the nicknamed person, or the utterer, the person who assigns the nickname or the receiver, and the group that accepts and acknowledges it.

Descending from the theoretical to the practical, from the discussions and disputes carried out on the scientific field to the environment in which the nickname is born, we find that the distinction between the two categories, *nickname* and *appellation*, does not work. The notion of *appellation* is not used in rural areas (nor in urban areas too much), it appears especially in the specific works. In everyday life, the term in use is that of *nickname* (also used throughout this article).

On addressing the inspiration of the popular spirit, in assigning nicknames, it is life itself in all its aspects; here are some of them – food: *Caşcaval-cheese, Cozonac-cake, Făină-flour, Mazăre-peas, Gogoaşă-doughnut, Morcov-carrot, Nucă-walnut, Pepene-melon* etc.; access routes: *Cărare-footpath, Potecă-path, Punte-footbridge* etc.; colours: *Albu-white, Bălănici-whitish, Galben-yellow, Negru-black, Negrilă-blacky* etc.; entopic elements: *Baltă-pond, Branişte-clump of trees, Dumbravă-groove, Movilă-hillock, Pădure-forest, Poiană-glade, Ţugui-hill peak* etc.; ethnicities: *Bulgaru-Bulgarian, Cazacu-Cossack, Grecu-Greek, Rusu-Russian, Sârbu-Serbian, Tătaru-Tartar* etc.; phenomena encountered in nature: *Brumă-frost, Crivăţ-north wind, Gerilă-frosty, Potop-flood, Răcoare-chill, Secetă-draught, Vântu-wind* etc.; metals: *Aramă-copper, Aur-gold, Argint-silver, Chilimbar-amber* etc.; items/fabrics concerning the clothing: *Aba-dreadnought, Basma-headscarf, Ciorec-trosers, Cojocu-sheepskin coat, Opincă-peasant's sandal, Papuc-slipper, Pâslaru-mule shoe* etc.; objects/tools related to people's lives (inside or outside the household): *Căldare-cauldron, Cărbune-charcoal, Cotigă-small cart, Drâmbă-jew's harp, Fuior-distaff, Furcă-pitchfork, Lopată-shovel, Suveică-shuttle, Topor-axe, Urcior-pitcher* etc.; parts of the human body: *Buză-lip, Burtă-belly, Căpăţână-head, Frunte-forehead, Gâlcă-wen, Guşă-maw, Talpă-foot, Ureche-ear* etc.; plants and animals: *Arici-hedgehog, Bobocu-bud, Busuioc-basil, Calu-horse, Cioară-crow, Creangă-branch, Dafin-laurel, Floare-*

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[5] T. Oancă, *Controversial issues in Romanian onomastic research,* Craiova, "Scrisul Românesc" Publishing House, 1996, pp. 11–12.

flower etc.; the position in the social hierarchy: *Birnicu-tribute ower, Boieru-boyar, Ciocoiu-exploiter, Robu-servant* etc.; kinship and appellation: *Bunicu-grandpa, Duduca-miss, Finu-god son, Frate-brother, Lelică-auntie, Tătucu-dad* etc.; physical and psychical traits: *Calicu-cheap, Cârnul-snub, Chelu-bald, Drăguţul-handsome, Lungul-long, Mutu-mute, Scurtu-short* etc.; units of measurement: *Arşinel* etc.

A significant number of nicknames were assigned observing the lack of physical and mental integrity of some people, the intention of the "authors" being, as a rule, to highlight such deficiencies of the subjects concerned. In this paper, we will narrow the circle of research further, focusing on nicknames that refer to certain medical aspects, namely, vices of thought. The community called those with such shortcomings *nebuni-the fool* and/or *proşti-the stupid*.

The analysed material was mainly provided to us by the *Anthroponymic Index* we are working on, based on the seven volumes of the *Toponymic Dictionary of Romania. Oltenia*[6] and the *Dictionary of Romanian surnames*[7]. They are not the only sources, however; we resorted to others (which can be found in the notes and in the bibliography), whenever it was considered it necessary.

Some generalities about the qualificatives *nebun (fool)* and *prost (stupid)*.

Fools and *stupid* are attributes that accompany, sometimes as a nickname, sometimes as an appellative or patronymic, at the terminus of the denominational system evolution, some of the members of our community. These names have as origin the village rather than the urban environment, because the rural is the space where people know each other very well and interact frequently with each other[8], facts that constitute a more than favourable environment in the appearance of qualifiers, in general, of those in question, in particular. A mention that we must make from the beginning is that beyond the cases in which nicknames are the "product" of evidence – those nicknamed have real deficiencies –, there are also cases in which their appearance is related to the subjectivity of those who name, and cannot be "proven" at the level of the behaviour of those targeted.

Usually, rural settlements have a fool or a madman of the village, with a well-determined role in the development of the community life: "He runs all day through the village, spreading the latest news, the freshest rumours and gossip…, but especially observing everything with the objectivity that only a certain candour can offer you. At important feasts, parish fairs and memorials, the village fool is

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[6] DTRO, coordinator prof. Gh. Bolocan, PhD, published in Craiova, Universitaria Press: vol. I (A–B), 1993, 414 p.; vol. II (C–D), 1995, 428 p.; vol. 3 (E–H), 2002, 283 p.; vol. 4 (J–N), 2003, 309 p.; vol. V (O–R), 2004, 337 p.; vol. 6 (S–Ţ), 2006, 284 p.; vol. 7 (U–Z), 2007, 329 p. *The index* includes, alphabetically, all names of people from the mentioned region and we estimate that it will have about 800 pages.

[7] Iorgu Iordan, DNFR, Scientific and Encyclopedia Publishing, 1983.

[8] And because of the smaller number of population than in cities.

considered the safest courier to the underworld; He is given alms, that is, food, clothes, sometimes even furniture, which the living want to send to the passed-away. He is regarded in the village with tender humour, because people know that, through him, they drain their frustrations, fears, longing and strained relationships"[9].

But *the fool* and *the stupid* are not always what they seem to be. Sometimes, the traditional consciousness has placed in this category those who – through a game of dissimulation – seem rather individuals endowed with wisdom or with a certain purity and simplicity of the soul, camouflaged under the guise of people deprived of intellectual capacities. The literature (national and universal) offers us a rich gallery of examples. Typologically, we meet both heroes like those in *Human Stupidity*[10], whose actions taken in various life situations fully justify the title of the story – illustrating the classic genre of stupidity, and fools/fools-wise, such as *Călin the Fool*[11], one of the many characters who stand at the antipode, cleverly coping with the events they face (in this case, fooling the dragons) and proving, the latter, the incorrectness of the appellatives conferred upon them.

Other times, *madness/stupidity* is linked to a certain way of feeling. Riga Crypto is considered crazy because, falling in love, he wants to escape the limits of his own existential condition[12].

Dichotomously, the appellation crazy is interpreted in the religious register. The lexeme opposes the "fools for Christ", the "wise unto God, and foolish from the point of view of the world… "[13], to those considered fools because they deny the existence of God ("Said the fool in his heart, 'There is no God!'"[14]). Crazy is not the individual for whom the lack of the mental faculties is a congenital problem, but one who has no faith in divinity or who has lost it.

 Much has been written about *madness* and *stupidity*[15]: philosophy, literature, psychology, medicine, sociology, anthropology, and those who have focused on the subject cannot fail to be tributary to the eras in which they lived. Vasile Pavelcu, in *The Eulogy of Stupidity. Psychology applied to everyday life* said that: "Stupidity has enjoyed the attention of great scholars in the past. At one time it was regarded

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[9] See http://dilemaveche.ro/sectiune/tema-saptamanii/articol/prostul-satului (site accessed on 18.07.2023).

[10] Ion Creangă, *Opere*, edited edition, preface and glossary by acad. prof. G. Călinescu, Bucharest, State Publishing House for Literature and Art, 1953, pp. 257–261.

[11] Mihai Eminescu, *Poezii – prose literară*, edited by Petru Creția, vol. II, Bucharest, Cartea Românească, 1978, pp. 178–196.

[12] Through total devotion and sacrificial power (I. Turgheniev, *Hamlet și Don Quijote*, Opere, XI, Bucharest, Publishing House for Universal Literature, 1962, p. 10.

[13] See http://www.pateric.ro/capitolul-xxxix-despre-fericita-nebunie-pentru-hristos-care-naste-deplina-smerenie-si-care-aduce-duh-dumnezeiesc-si-har-ceresc/ (site accessed on 20.03.2023).

[14] *Psalmii*, 13, 52.

[15] There are even stories on this subject. Here is an example: *The universal history of stupidity explained by some of the most intelligent specialists in the world* (coordinator Jean-François Marmion), translated from French by Anca Calangiu, Bucharest, Litera, 2022.

kindly by the world of scholars. It is hard to praise stupidity today, when it is despised even in the world of fools. Fortunately, the phenomenon is neither permanent nor general… There were times when intellectual simplicity enjoyed a special esteem, as did madness"[16], "the depreciation of stupidity, together with the appreciation of intelligence"[17] being a product of civilization.

Fool and *stupid* in anthroponymy and toponymy.

At present, the two qualifiers are, both in anthroponymy and toponymy, meaningless "labels"; This is not the case at the level of the common language, where the notions have, in terms of semantics, convergent and divergent points, and only a particular analysis, a reconstruction of the causes and conditions under which the nickname appeared could enlighten us from which of the meanings the name today claims its existence.

Fools and *stupid* can lexicalize the same concept (entering into relationships of synonymy) – "a person lacking intelligence, judgment, acting in an inappropriate way" – and, according to DEX[18], and different concepts: *crazy* –

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[16] Vasile Pavelcu, *The Eulogy of Stupidity. Psychology applied to everyday life* (selection of texts and preface by Adrian Neculau), Iaşi, Polirom, 1999, p. 300.

[17] *Ibidem*, p. 301.

[18] *Dicţionarul explicativ al limbii române*, second edition, Bucharest, Univers Enciclopedic, 1996, s.v. fool, stupid. Semantic differences are also plastically expressed through phraseologisms. Most have their own meaning, illustrating a person's lack of reason – *parcă se bat calicii / nebunii la / în gura cuiva*-somebody who is ravished by hunger; *a fi un prost şi jumătate*-to be very stupid; *prost ca noaptea / ca oaia / ca cizma*-stupid as a donkey; *a fi prost îngăurit*-stupid as an owl; *a-şi găsi prostul*-find someone to trick; *a ţine pe cineva de prost*-continue a relation with someone you consider stupid; *decât cu prostul la câştig, mai bine cu deşteptul la pagubă*-better lose along a wise man, than gain along a stupid man; *pe unde prostul se îneacă*-approx. where dumb people lose their head, deşteptul trece ca pe pod-the wise man does something easily; *prost de-a binelea*-extremely stupid; *prost de dă în gropi*-dumb and dumber in the same person; *prost fără pereche*-unseen stupidity; *prostul când s-a făcut împărat, întâi pe tată-său l-a spânzurat*-when the fool became emperor, his father hang first; *prostul întâi vorbeşte şi apoi gândeşte*-the fool first talks, and then thinks; *a da în baltă de prost*-extremely stupid; *înalt ca bradul, dar prost ca gardul*-tall as a tree, stupid as a donkey; *fereşte-mă, Doamne, de judecata prostului*-Lord, keep me away from the fool's judgement; *lung cât o prăjină şi prost ca o găină*-tall as a pole and stupid as a hen; *a fi prost crescut*-bad mannered; *a fi rău / prost dispus*-in a bad humour; *a fi în pasă proastă*-in a bad temper; *a avea o părere proastă despre cineva*-to have a bad opinion on somebody –, while the meaning of others, metaphorically, involves certain emotional states (sometimes behavioral) – *a fi / a umbla nebun după cineva / după ceva*-to be madly in love with somebody; *a fi nebun (de bucurie, de groază, de durere)*-mad of (joy, fear, pain); *a fi nebun de dragostea cuiva*-mad about somebody; *a face pe nebunul*-to play mad; *a face pe prostul*-to play stupid (examples extracted from: Gheorghe Bolocan, Tatiana Voronţova, Elena Şodolescu-Silvestru, Iustina Burci, *Dicţionar frazeologic român-rus,* Craiova, Universitaria Press, 1999, vol. I, A-M, pp. 660–661, 837–838).

At the level of the common language, there are also a whole series of constructions that convey the same idea, of stupidity or madness: *bou-lui-Dumnezeu, vită încălţată, gură-cască, prinde-muşte, boboc, împuşcă-'n-lună, mură-'n-gură, papă-lapte, încurcă-lume, tigvă-seacă* (all signify a very stupid person, a Jackanapes) etc. (Aureliu Candrea, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–41).

"alienated, mad", "restless, writhing, lively (being)"; "who has no limits, limitations, measure"; "who is not good"; "Buffoon, jester in the king's courts" (hence the name of bishop, in chess, in Romanian); *stupid* – "illiterate, unlearned, ignorant person; man lacking sophistication, simple, unevolved"; "of modest social condition, of the people, of the low, of the common"; 'low-quality, worthless'; "unskilled, unprepared, clumsy".

What places us in the plane of uncertainty, on addressing the meaning from which anthroponyms come, is the distance in time from the moment of their appearance. Stefan Paşca remarked that: "The social nucleus, forgetting the genuine circumstance in which an individual was called with a mocking name, but keeping this name, by virtue of an inertia, forms, in time, a vague conception, artificial, as far as the motive of choosing the mocking name is concerned"[19] and may become uncertain and the underlying acceptance (where there are several).

From our point of view, we are inclined to believe that it is less about the pathological in the case of the analysed nicknames and more about a certain intellectual simplism. In fact, Aureliu Candrea[20] said that, according to the commoners, "stupidity is not something natural, it is not a defect resulting from the too small development of the brain, but a behaviour that man can easily get rid of, if they want".

The investigated area is, as mentioned, the Oltenia area, and the source, the *Toponymic Dictionary* made for this region. Analysing this information, we notice that the qualifiers *crazy and* stupid *appear more frequently* – (especially the first of the lexemes has a branched frequency and territorial distribution), and secondarily, with a weaker representation, several other appellations in the same sphere. Here are the examples:

NEBUN (fool): *Balta lu Păun Nebunu* [VL], *Balta Nebuna* [pond v.c. Piscu Vechi-DJ], *Balta Nebunilor* [v. Arceşti-Cot c. Pleşoiu-OT], *Balta Nebuniţa* [v.c. Pisculeţ c. Piscu Vechi-DJ], *Bordeiu Nebunului* [c. Bârca-DJ], *Conacu lu Nebunu* [v.c. Săuleşti-GJ]; *Dealu Nebunului/Dealu lu Nebunu* [v. Ploştina town Motru-GJ]; *Drumu Vii Nebunului* [v. Crângu c. Scundu-GJ]; *Fântâna la Nebunu* [v. Otetelişu c. Bălceşti-VL]; *Fântâna lu Rică Nebunu* [v. Ungureni c. Gherceşti-DJ]; *Izvoarele Nebune* [v.c. Butoieşti-MH]; *La Nebuna* [v. Dezrobiţi c. Frânceşti-VL]; *La Podu Nebunilor* [v.c. Vişina-OT]; *Mahalaua lu Nebunu* [v. Şitoaia c. Almăj-DJ]; *Moara Nebunilor* [v.c. Ponoarele-MH]; *Nebuna* [valley v. Racoviţa c. Braloştiţa-DJ; pondvs. Popeşti c. Melineşti-DJ; village c. Piscu Vechi-DJ; commune-DJ; estate c. Piscu Vechi-DJ; pond v. Pisculeţ c. Piscu Vechi-DJ][21]; *Nebuni* [villlage c. Slivileşti-

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[19] Ştefan Pasca, *op. cit.,* p. 51.

[20] In *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[21] Toponyms based on the lexeme *nebuna* require a particular analysis; this can lead us to dichotomous etymological solutions: anthroponymic provenance, from the patronymic *Nebuna,* or common, from the adjective *nebună* (with the metaphorical meaning "stormy valley"), through substantivisation.

GJ]; *Nebuniţa* [pond v. Pisculeţ c. Piscu Vechi, v. Tunarii Vechi c. Poiana Mare-DJ]; *Nebunoaica* [estate v. Piscu Mare c. Stoieneşti-VL]; *Nebunu* [vineyard v. Călina c. Prundeni-VL]; *Pădurea Nebunească* [v. Hodoreasca c. Câlnic-GJ]; *Piscu Nebunului* [v. Fumureni c. Lungeşti-VL]; *Poiana Nebunului* [glade v.c. Bâcleş-MH]; *Prunii Nebunilor* [v. Şuşiţa c. Grozeşti-MH]; *Râpa Nebunului* [v. Măldăreştii de Jos, v. Telecheşti c. Măldăreşti-VL]; *Siliştea Nebunii* [place v. Pisculeţ c. Piscu Vechi-DJ]; *Şoseaua Nebunii* [v.c. Piscu Vechi-DJ]; *Truşcă Nebunu* [peak s. Dejoi c. Fârtăţeşti-VL]; *Vâlceaua lu Nebunu* [v. Almăjel and Fratoştiţa town. Filiaşi-DJ]; *Via Nebunului* [arable plot v. Prodăneşti c. Ioneşti-VL; v. Crângu c. Scundu, v. Ciorăşti and Slăviteşti c. Şirineasa-VL]; *Via Nebunului* [place town. Drăgăşani-VL];

PROST (stupid): *Cracu Proştilor* [town Novaci-GJ]; *Prostii*[22] [part of village v.c. Lădeşti, village c. Lădeşti-VL].

Anthroponyms originating from lexemes of the same semantic sphere:

BLEAMBĂ (stupid, clumsy man[23]): *Pivniţa Bleambului* [v. Ilaciu c. Alunu-VL];

BLEG (lacking energy, lacking willpower, stupid): *Blegi* [village c. Bărăşti-OT]; *Pârâu lu Blegu* [v.c. Sineşti-VL]; *Puţu lu Barbu Blegu* [v.c. Vultureşti-OT]; *Puţu lu Blegeanu* [v. Piscu Petrei c. Budeşti-VL];

GOGOMAN (fam. şi depr., silly, goofy): *Sălciile lu Gogomanu* [v.c. Devesel-MH];

MOCOFAN (person who shows lack of intelligence/education; stupid; boor, snarl): *Drumu Mocofanilor* [v. Seculeşti c. Bulzeşti-DJ];

MOTÂNTÂU (man of nothing, fool; dumb, weak, sluggish): *Drumu lu Motântâu* [v. Ohaba c. Şovarna-MH];

NĂTĂRĂU[24] (a man of limited mind, who hardly comprehends a thing, who acts without judgment; stupid, foolish, silly, clumsy): *Dosu lu Nătărău* [v. Valea Mare c. Runcu-GJ]; *La Tarlaua Nătărăi* [v. Curtişoara c. Dobreţu-DJ]; *Nătărăi* [part of village v. Gura Racului c. Bulzeşti-DJ; village c. Bulzeşti-DJ; part of vilage v. Curtişoara c. Dobreţu-OT];

NĂTÂNG (person without intelligence, without abilities, fool, silly): *Gropanu ale Nătângu* [v.c. Orlea-OT]; *Ulucu ale Nătângu* [lane v.c. Orlea-OT];

NĂUC (dizzy, bewildered – due to strong emotion, pain, noise, etc.; disoriented, bewildered, astonished, stunned, confused; obsolete and popular,

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[22] Toponym *Prostii* is based on the group name *proşti*, with phonetic modification, to lose the meaning of the word.

[23] The definitions of terms in this category have been extracted from the DEX (see note 11) or from the explanations received, in toponymic surveys, the respective topics.

[24] Toponym *Nătărăi* is also registered by Iorgu Iordan (*Toponimia românească*, Bucharest, PRR Academy Press, 1963, p. 319) in Roşiorii de Vede and Olteţul district. The first is doubled by the toponym *Însurăţei*, which shows that there may also be "an irony towards married people (too early?)". In fact, the village was founded in 1879, "through the ownership of a number of married couples" (*Ibidem*).

dumb, stupid, unskilled): *Crucea lu Năucu* [v. Smârdan c. Ciupercenii Noi-GJ]; *La Năucu* [v.c. Mihăieşti-VL]; *Năuci* [trail, forest c. Hinova-MH];

NEGĂBUI (absent-minded): *Negăbuiu* [loc s. Lunca c. Bujoreni-VL];

NEGHIOB (a person with a narrow mind, who hardly comprehends a thing, who acts without judgment; clumsy, unskillful, foolish, silly, stupid man): *Cotu Neghiobului* [v.c. Cerăt-DJ];

NEROD (a person who has a narrow mind, who hardly comprehends a thing, who acts without judgment; stupid, silly, foolish, imbecile): *La Mihai Nărodu* [v. Răcarii de Sus town Filiaşi-DJ]; *La Năroada* [v.c. Frânceşti-VL]; *La Nărodu* [v. Turburea de Sus c. Turburea-GJ]; *Lacu Nărodului* [v. Vârvor c. Vârvoru de Jos-DJ]; *Piscu Năroadelor* [v. Colţeşti, v. Ilaciu c. Alunu-VL]; *Poiana Nărodului* [v. Sâmbotin c. Schela-GJ, v. Gura c. Bâcleş-MH]; *Tufa Nărodului* [v. Dobriţa c. Runcu-GJ]; *Valea Năroade* [valley-GJ];

SUCITU (who is not or does not act like everyone else; strange, silly; About people's manifestations: expressing or showing strangeness): *Fântâna lu Sucitu* [v. Lintea c. Scoarţa-GJ];

TONT (stupid, foolish, silly man): *Pivniţa lu Tontu* [v.c. Leoteşti-GJ];

TURBAT (sick with rabies; fig., angry, violent, wild, crazy): *Cuca lu Turbatu* [v. Arsanca c. Mihăieşti-VL]; *Dealu Turbaţilor* [v.c. Bâlteni, v. Peşteana c. Bâlteni, v. Dumbrăveni c. Crasna-GJ]; *Fântâna lu Turbatu* [v.c. Bratovoieşti-DJ]; *Hotaru Turbaţilor* [place v. Crasna v. Drăgoieşti v. Dumbrăveni c. Crasna-GJ]; *În Turbaţi* [place v. Peşteana de Jos c. Fărcăşeşti-GJ]; *Odaia Turbăcenilor* [v. Dumbrăveni c. Crasna-GJ]; *Pe sub Turbaţi* [v. Peşteana-Jiu c. Bâlteni-GJ]; *Piscu Turbatu* [v. Ţiu c. Cernăteşti-DJ]; *Turbaţi* [plateau v.c. Bâlteni-GJ; comună-GJ; village, hill, forest, stream, historic place c. Crasna-GJ]; *Turbaţii din Deal* [part of village v. Dumbrăveni c. Crasna-GJ]; *Turbaţii din Vale* [part of village v. Dumbrăveni c. Crasna-GJ]; *Turbăteşti* [hamlet c. Tătuleşti-OT]; *Valea Hotaru Turbaţilor* [c. Crasna-GJ].

In the case of hydronyms that have received the name *Turbata*, the characteristics of water are taken into account, usually being a "noisy, rushing, boiling water"; the adjective *turbat (rabid)* is considered synonymous with "rău"/"rea" (masculine and feminine in Romanian, for "evil") and is used especially in connection with *vale (valley)*, "to call mountain streams with a particularly fast flow"[25];

TÂMP (stupid, idiot): *Tâmpeni* [village c. Movileni-OT; commune-OT]; *Tâmpenii de Jos* [village c. Movileni-OT]; *Tâmpenii de Sus* [village c. Movileni-OT];

UITOACĂ (forgetful: who forgets easily, who has a weak memory, distracted, confused): *Fântâna lu Uitoacă* [v. Brabeţi c. Daneţi-DJ];

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[25] Iorgu Iordan, *Toponimia…,* p. 321.

ZURLIU (bustling; frisky; who has lost the faculty of normal judgment; who is out of his mind; foolish; screaming; crackpot): *Fântâna Zurliului* [v. Râpa c. Motru-GJ];

ZGLOBIU (cute, mischievous, crazy; mischievous, evil): *Cracu lu Zglobiu* [v.c. Peştişani-GJ].

With the same meaning, "stupid, goofy, silly, clumsy", in Muntenia[26], we came across the name *Netoţ*[27], in the following toponyms: *Cătunu de lângă Netoţi* [village c. Dumbrava-PH]; *Netoţeni* [estate c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR]; *Netoţi* [place v. Conţeşti c. Davideşti-AG; village c. Perieţi-IL; village c. Dumbrava, comună-PH; estate c. Dumbrava-PH; part of village v. Merişani c. Dobroteşti-TR; village, estate c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR; commune-TR]; *Netoţii de Jos* [village c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR; commune-TR]; *Netoţii de Sus* [village c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR; commune-TR]; *Netoţii Moşteni* [c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR; commune-TR]; *Netoţi-Trivalea* [estate v.c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR; forest v.c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR]; *Netotu* [mountain, forest town. Câmpulung-AG; mountain v.c. Nucşoara-AG; village-AG]; *Piscu Netoţilor* [v. Popeşti c. Sineşti-VL]; *Piscu Netotului* [mountain c. Nucşoara-AG; forest c. Nucşoara-AG; place v.c. Aninoasa-AG]; *Tălpeni-Netoţi* [village within v.c. Trivalea Moşteni-TR].

The above examples require some observations:

The first concerns the function of the words analyzed before entering the structure of place names. We find that some of them have made the transition (by onymization) from appellation to proper name (toponym), as in: *Poiana Nebunului*, *Poiana Nărodului* etc. Others, however, already have the quality of proper names: they are anthroponyms; there should be made the distinction between those that accompany a personal name – the individualization being one of maximum degree, as the first name of the person is also mentioned: *Balta Păun Nebunu, Crângu lu Gheorghe Nebunu, Lacu lu Marin Nebunu, Truşcă Nebunu, Puţu lu Barbu Blegu* etc. and those that give us partial individualization – *Conacu lu Nebunu, Dealu Nebunului, Nebunu, Sălciile lu Gogomanu, Pivniţa lu Tontu* etc.

Establishing the origin is not an easy thing and is done after the investigation carried out for each name. There are names which, although they have full formal identity – *Poiana Nebunului*, for example, the toponym found in Bâcleş village, in the commune with the same name, in Mehedinţi county, but also in Măneciu Pământeni village, in Măneciu commune, Prahova county, is in relation to contrariness from an etymological point of view, having as determinants different words from the point of view of the function performed: in the first case, *Nebunul* is an anthroponymous, in the second, a common noun.

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[26] *Toponymic dictionary of Romania. Muntenia (*DTRM) (coord. prof. Nicolae Saramandu, PhD), vol. 5 (N–P), Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2013.

[27] Place names *Netotu* could in some cases be synonymous with "gypsy(s)" and in others with "lads, unmarried" (see Iorgu Iordan, *Toponimia…*, p. 319).

The ambiguity disappears in the case of constructions where the quality of the determinants is obviously toponymic. These are those that specify the place; they are usually accompanied by prepositions or adverbial determiners – *Cătunu de lângă Netoţi, În Turbaţi, La Năroada, La Nărodu, La Năucu, La Nebuna, La Podu Nebunilor,* etc.; *Tâmpenii de Jos, Tâmpenii de Sus, Turbaţii din Deal, Turbaţii din Vale.*

Another observation concerns the morphological class to which the analyzed terms belong: the material presented includes – in its vast majority – nouns. Of these, a small part benefits from "independence", forming their own place names: *Blegu, Nătărăi, Năuci, Nebuna*[28]*, Nebunaşu, Nebuniţa, Nebunoaica, Turbăteşti, Prosteşti.* From a morphological point of view, this "independence" corresponds to the nominative case – singular and plural (group name).

Most of the names are found engaged in compound structures; In these situations, the connections between the terms of the compound are made with the help of the genitive – synthetic case (*Balta Nebunilor, Cotu Neghiobului, Cracu Proştilor, Dealu Turbaţilor* etc.) or analytical (*Conacu lu Nebunu, Cuca lu Turbatu, Fântâna lu Rică Nebunu, Gropanu ale Nătângu, Puţu lu Blegu* etc.). Other times, we encounter somewhat larger constructions, in which the accusative with prepositions locates the denominated object (*Sălciile din Vadu Turbatu* etc.).

If nouns are the majority, the minority is represented by several adjectives formed from the qualifier *nebun*: *Izvoarele Nebune, Pârâu Nebun*, the determiner targeting "character" traits of named geographic objects. In the case of the toponym *Pădurea Nebunească*, we are dealing with a possessive adjective or "belonging"[29], coming from the name of the forest owner (*Nebunu*).

Another observation is that *neither madness* nor *stupidity* are limited by gender. Therefore, the toponymy has retained, with the drastic reduction in the number of appearances – directly proportional to the frequency of participation[30] of the women in social life –, some representatives of the fair sex: *La Năroada, Nebuna, Piscu Năroadelor, Toanta, Siliştea Nebunii* etc.

Toponomastics has its own criteria for selecting lexical material. Sometimes, however, these criteria are violated, requiring changes from outside. This happened especially after 1948, when officials wanted, among other things, a toponymy "with a new face", freed from the "tares" of the local denomination of the past, and reflecting the political reality of the time. There are many known examples in

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[28] The toponyms *Nebuna* benefit from a double etymological solution: on the one hand, noun, they can come from a homonymous anthroponym, on the other hand, adjectival, especially when the name refers to geographical objects within the sphere of hydronymy. The situation is similar in the case of the names *Turbatu, Turbata.*

[29] *Dictionary of Romanian elements from Slavic-Romanian documents, 1374–1600,* (DERS), resp. editor Gh. Bolocan, Bucharest, SRR Academy Press, 1981, p. XXIX.

[30] The status of women was, in the past centuries, one of physical and intellectual inferiority compared to that of the men, and their space for "action" limited to the family environment.

which the authorities changed names, which became uncomfortable, with others required by the conjuncture of time: *Braşov → Stalin*, *Ferdinand → Oţelul Roşu*, *Oneşti → Gheorge Gheorghiu Dej* etc. In this context, any name "with an indecent, insulting or denigrating character" cannot be accepted in a society that aimed to create a new man. We refer here to names derived from anthroponyms that are based on a nickname: … *Balamuci* (< *balamuc*, "clinic for the mentally alienated; madhouse"… *Tâmpeni* (< adj. *tâmp* "tâmpit" + suf. -eni), *Tonţi* (< adj. *tont* "stupid, foolish, idiot"), *Turbaţi* (< adj. *turbat* "sick with rabies; mad with pain, fright, etc.")…"[31]. Those who decided on these changes, however, lost sight of the fact that the toponyms cited do not come from words of the common language whose meaning is active, but from anthroponyms, meaningless words that have only the designative function. In the materials studied for the composition of this article, there has been also encountered an example in which the anthroponym, *Balamuceanul*[32], comes from an *ecclesionym*[33] – *Balamuci*[34].

<div align="center">*</div>

With the meaning "crazy" or "stupid", we also come across other names in the anthroponymic inventory. Some are based on regional or dialectal words, others come from borrowed appellations; Their origin is somewhat harder to discover and requires knowledge of certain peculiarities in the evolution of our lexicon and language. Here are some examples drawn from DNFR:

Bălgunea (cf. ung. *balga, balgán* "silly"), *Dodu(l)* (*dod* "simple, stupid"; cf. bg. *Dodo*), *Dura* (bg. *Dura* "stupid woman"; cf. and the appellative Russian. *dura* with the same meaning), *Durbală* (cf. ukr. *Durbas* "stupid"), *Durnea* (ukr. *Durnij* "prost"), *Duru* (gr. *Douros*, bg. *Duro* or ukr. *dur* "stupidity"), *Gabur* (same with *Gabor* from hung. *Gábor*, "stupid") etc. – borrowed.

Bondrea (*bondră* "silly woman, good for nothing"), *Captiu* (*capchiu*, var. a lui *capiu* "foolished, confused"), *Duduruz* (*duduruz* "bully, unmannerly; stupid,

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[31] Nicolae Felecan, *Oiconime „decretate". Aspecte sociolingvistice,* în "Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Onomastics "Name and Naming" Conventional / Unconventional in Onomastics" (edited by Ovidiu Felecan), Cluj Napoca, Editura Mega, Editura Argonaut, 2015, p. 482.

[32] A certain Peter's will stated: "… I have 18 queen beehives at Abbot Balamuceanul, for my wife to own, to take beewax and take care of me…" (15 of July1748), in Gheorghe Lazăr (editor), *Testamente de negustori şi meşteşugari din Ţara Românească (sec. XVII-XIX)*, Iaşi, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University from Iaşi Press, 2021, document no. 27.

[33] Ecclesioms – names of ecclesiastical establishments.

[34] Regarding the origin of the monastery's name, the information is contradictory: on the one hand, it is believed that the monastery could have served, at some point, as a shelter for the alienated (https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%83n%C4%83stirea_Balamuci), on the other hand, the name has to do with the fact that the founders of the first hermitage in this place were monks "fools for Christ" (https://www.crestinortodox.ro/biserici-manastiri/manastirea-sitaru-67849.html) (sites accessed on 18.07.2023).

goofy"), *Găgăuţă* (*găgăuţă* "stupid man, dumb, fool"; could also be *găgăuz* "resident of Dobrogea, Christian, but speaking Turkish language"), *Gongu* (*gongu* "stupid, imbecile"), *Gudumac* ("goofy"), *Nafliu* (cf. *năflete – nătăfleţ* "goofy, dumb"), *Navlig* (*năvlig*, variant of *năvleg* "goofy, dumb; bad-mannered, rough") etc. – regional, dialectal.

Bolândău (*bolând* "idiot, stupid" +suf. *-ău*), *Mihoc* (*Mihu* + suf. dim. and/or augmentative *-oc*; cf. and ung. *mihók* "1. clumsy; 2. fool, goofy"), *Moholea* (*mohoi* "a stupid person" + suf. *-ole(a)*), *Moholică* (*Moholea* + suf. dim. *-ică*), *Motronea* (*motron* "a stupid, dumb, clumsy person" + suf. *-ea*) etc. – derivates.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

Last but not least, *stupidity* and *madness* can also be called metaphorically; a series of anthroponyms become trivialized by abuse and become, at some point, synonymous with stupidity: *Ion, Vlad, Tănase, Matei*[35].

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

Toponymy still proves, as always, its fidelity to "the history of places, people and their language"[36], indiscriminately detaining rich and poor, honest and less honest[37], the beautiful or less physically or mentally endowed, with the only condition that they have been, at a certain moment of their existence, by their actions taken or by personal traits (considered to be) out of the ordinary, in the sphere of interest of the community in which they lived. In particular to the latter, "… the people have reserved for them, from the inexhaustible treasure of their spirit, a grain of satire, a word of mockery, to scourge their defects or the behaviour of theirs, which do not please them"[38].

Although very limited, but sometimes with elements that stand out for their age in the system of personal names[39], the segment analysed in these pages offers us a sample of interpersonal relationships, a psychosocial and ethnocultural image of the rural environment of the past.

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[35] Aureliu Candrea, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–44.

[36] Vasile Ioniţă, *Nume de locuri din Banat*, Timişoara, Facla Press, 1982, p. 7.

[37] See Iustina Burci, *Categorii sociale periferice în toponimia din Oltenia şi Muntenia (I)*, in "Analele Universităţii din Craiova. Seria Ştiinţe Filologice. Lingvistică", year XXXVIII, no. 1–2, Craiova, Universitaria press, 2016, pp. 20-29.

[38] Aureliu Candrea, *Poreclele la români,* Bucharest, Socecu & Comp. Bookshop Press, 1895, p. 7.

[39] Some of them already have a long existence, of several centuries, both in toponymy and anthroponymy, as archival documents demonstrate; thus, *nebun* appears as a place name, in Moldavia, in 1448, and as a personal name, in Wallachia, in 1500; *netot* – in toponymy, in 1586 (Wallachia), *turbat* – in anthroponymy, in 1594 (Wallachia), in toponymy, in 1428 (Moldavia) (DERS, s.v. fool, imbecile, rabid).

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