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FIELD OF RESEARCH – PHILOLOGY

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**THE MORPHO-SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF SURNAMES IN TULCEA  
COUNTY**

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## **Introduction**

1. Hereby research project, as the very title of the thesis indicates, is centered on studying surnames in Tulcea county, from the perspective of onomastic motivation, as well as morphological and semantic one. We selected this geographical area, for the reason that it has not been studied in terms of surnames, hoping to bring new data regarding onomastic monography of Tulcea county.

The objectives of the paper are, firstly, to establish an inventory of surnames from a certain area (Tulcea county), comparable to that of other areas better characterized at the onomastic level, as well as to the general onomasticon of the Romanian language. The subsequent objectives refer to the study of the surnames from the point of view of the geographical area and establish the relationship between them and the history and geography of the area. We have had in mind, especially if these proper names express dialectical, regional or popular aspects.

Another objective was to to present the relationship between the surnames and other antroponym classes or between the surnames and toponyms, on the one hand, and to describe the method of manifestation of onomastic function change between subclasses of proper names, on the other hand. We tried to learn whether surnames are a source for last names and to indicate the moment when „*onomasticization*” (the loss of the meaning of the common word based on surname) (Tomescu 2011: 39) is produced.

2. Hereby treatise is based on two types of sources: direct, represented by study fields we conducted in Tulcea county from March to November 2010, April 2011, from July to September 2013, and indirect, especially lexicographic sources, from which we extracted various surnames in order to have a starting point of comparison between the

practical data of our thesis and the surname general inventory of the language.

The work methodology is centered on various approaches from similar domains (dialectology, semantics, morphology). The first step requires gathering the information during field research (a method borrowed from dialectology – onomastic inquiry), and the second step records the semantic elements (the analysis of the surnames motivation). The third step includes the description of the morphological structure of the surnames (structural analysis) and their taxonomy based on certain criteria (motivation, use, morphological structure, grammatical features, origin, applicability of the surnames etc.).

The onomastic inquiry was conducted based on a personal questionnaire (included in the Appendices of the thesis), adapted after the questionnaires used in dialectology (ALR 1961, 1965, 1966; NALR 1987; NALRR 1980), as well as the onomastic questionnaire used in the researches from Olt County (Pașca 1936: 10-13).

Most of the informers were reserved, but, after they were introduced the purpose of the research paper, they have become more open and cooperative. At first, the process of gathering the onomastic data was based on the answers of the respondents of different ages (from 15 to 80 years of age). Later, noticing that the best respondents are the old ones, we considered this criterion as a reference point.

The field inquiry was conducted in 47 localities from Tulcea county, most of the research being done in communes and villages. The total of the gathered surnames is 423. The number of the surnames in each locality is indicated precisely next to the name of the locality. The extensive list of the localities in Tulcea county may be found in the Appendix of this thesis.

3. The studies of Romanian anthroponymy, as bibliographical sources, helped us understood the evolution of names, their taxonomy and the relationship between the onomastic subclasses (Graur 1965). The change of onomastic functions of some names within the onomastic system, the relationship between the first name and surname, between the last name and surname, between toponyms and surnames most debated in onomastics (Pătruț 1984, Tomescu 1998) represents the starting point for the theoretical study of the surnames.

If we refer to the semantics of the proper names, the lack of meaning of the anthroponyms and their functionality in context (Ichim-Tomescu 1975), led us to the idea

of desemantization / delexicalization, a phenomenon applicable to surnames, too. The multiple possibilities for interpreting proper names, the description of anthroponyms from the semantic, morphological, pragmatic and syntactic point of view (Miron-Fulea 2005) gives specificity to the proper names, delimiting them distinctly from the common names.

The studies which are centered on the grammar of the proper names supported defining certain grammar aspects of anthroponyms: formation of proper names with suffixes and presence of gender, number, case and determination (Graur 1965); the delimitation of a specific pattern for proper names by reference to grammatical features of gender, number, case and determination (Tomescu 1998, Miron-Fulea 2005).

The first study on the subject of surnames in specialized literature (Candrea 2001) is dedicated to nicknames, being considered a way to correct human defects. Thus, when the nickname becomes stable in the language, it becomes surname and it may be transmitted to descendants. The taxonomy of nicknames according to certain criteria allows only a semantic interpretation. The decision on the statute of surnames in the hereby thesis derives from the distinction between surnames and nicknames (Candrea 2001, Graur 1965, Stan 1973).

The terms surname and nickname have been differentiated starting with the first studies dedicated to this subject. Thus, the nickname becomes surname if constantly repeated by other members of that specific community, with the purpose of emphasizing defects or unpleasant habits of a person (in order to correct them) and functioning as a metaphor (Candrea 2001:152,185). The change from nickname to surname shows the evolution from semantic to anthroponymy. In this case, the surname is not derogatory anymore, it has an onomastic function in the denomination system. When the nickname is often used, it can be transmitted to the other members of that respective family (being a surname), becoming even a family name.

As a rule, the nickname disappears with the bearer, while the surname lasts in time. The surname and the nickname emphasizes the creation ability of the individual, succeeding to enrich with various linguistic forms the anthroponymic inventory of a zone. Practically, it is impossible to make a completed inventory of the nicknames (because of their temporary nature), while a subclass of a surname may be delimited

almost exactly (due to its more stable feature, by changing into first name, last name, patronym, matronym).

The monographies on surnames are very few, but they offered a general view of this linguistic phenomenon in various areas: Olt region (Pașca 1936), Bistriței Valley (Stan 1957), Iași County (Nuță 1969), Cotești village in Argeș county (Bănică 1980), Stolojeni village in Gorj county (Arcuș 1993), Aromanian communities (Nuțu 1999), Drăgușeni village in Șcheia commune, Iași county (Popescu-Șireteanu 1999). Sometimes, it is emphasized the use of surnames and nicknames for avoiding the homonymy in the official denotation (Firică 2007).

For a better understanding of the matters related to the morphologic and semantic statute of the surnames, our analysis benefited by the practical researches on proper names (Tomescu 1998, Miron-Fulea 2005) or on surnames (Pașca 1936, Nuță 1969).

When writing the hereby thesis, we have always kept in mind, on the one hand, the interdisciplinarity feature of the onomastics (history, geography, ethnology, etc.), and, on the other hand, the proper linguistic aspects (dialectology, language history, etymology, morphology, semantics, syntax, pragmatic linguistics, lexicology etc.). Among the linguistic domains, the morphology allows decomposition of surnames in minimal unities (morphemes) if they are considered common words which they are based on, and the vocabulary and semantics require inventorying, oldness / novelty and the meaning features of the surnames (the semantical analysis of this category of anthroponyms). History and geography determined the anthroponym aspects on certain temporal and spacial coordinates.

Considering that language represents thinking (Graur, Stati, Wald 1972: 19-20), that linguistic structures reflect the thinking of individuals, surnames are means to express ideas. Thus, it is underlined once again the social feature of the language, which functions only in a certain linguistic community (Cazacu 1966: 41; Graur, Stati, Wald 1972: 42, 44).

## **Chapter 1. Dobroudjan anthroponymy – general considerations**

### **1.1. Economic and social context of regional denomination**

If the subject of the research is made up by a certain county, it is necessary to include some information regarding the history and the population of that certain region (in order to have in view the role of the non-linguistic influences on the linguistic system). As a result of the field inquiry, this region offers the linguistic information which is necessary for the given research (by means of the native population in Tulcea).

Starting with the end of the seventh century B.C. and towards the beginning of the nineteenth century A.D., Tulcea county was influenced by the populations which crossed this border area: Greeks, Persians, Celts, Scythians, Sarmatians, Romans, Slavs, Bulgarians, Turks, Tatars, Hebrew, Armenians, Italians, Romanies etc. Each of these ethnicities had a certain influence on the aboriginal population. The strongest influences on the language and culture of the Romanians in this region came from Greek, Roman, Slav and Turkish populations. These ethnicities had also anthroponymic representation in the gathered Tulcean surnames.

The population of the county has been increasing starting with the nineteenth century due to colonization of this area with Romanian elements from other regions of the country (for preserving the national specificity) and alogeneic elements from outside the country (due to the invasion of those respective populations). In our century, it may be noticed a population decrease in Dobroudjan county, as well as the rest of the country.

Over the course of time, within the county, approximately 17 ethnicities have been living in perfect harmony and their traditions and beliefs have been integrated in the cultural and spiritual life of the region. Analysing the statistics of the year 2002, 90 % of the population declared to be Romanian and 10 % of other ethnicity, the most numerous ethnic groups being represented by Russians and Lipovans – 6,3% of the stable population, Turks and Tatars – 1,4%, Romanies – 0,9%, Greeks – 0,7%. As a conclusion, most of them are Romanians, followed by Russians and Lipovans, and then Turks, Tatars, followed by the least numerous Romanies and Greeks.



## **1.2. The place of Dobroudjan anthroponymy in the Romanian onomastic system**

1. The Dobroudjan anthroponymy, through its categories (first names, last names and surnames), mostly reflects the specific features of the anthroponymy in the whole Romanian zone, which leads to the idea that there is a certain continuity and unity in this linguistic domain.

While in Banat and Oltenia may be felt the Serbian influence, in Transylvania and Crişana and Maramureş – Hungarian and Ukrainian influence, in Moldova – the Ukrainian and Hungarian influence, in Dobroudja it may be noticed the existence of some regional Moldavian forms (a fact that may be explained due to the vicinity with Moldova, which brings nearer the Dobroudjan and Moldavian onomastic) (Constantinescu 1983), but also the ethnic mix reflected in foreign forms. Yet, the anthroponymic fundamentals are the same in all the Romanian regions.

Due to the innovation of non-native populations settled on this territory, the Dobroudjan anthroponymy needed to constantly renew itself, to keep up with the newly arrived populations, to assimilate and to adjust to them. The Romanian background has been preserved even if foreign elements appeared in the ethnical structure and at the language level.

The official system of denomination in Dobroudjan anthroponymy was the general one, made up of the individual first name and last name + family or group name, reflecting the naming of the people in official documents, in administrative life, at school and in other state institutions (Lazia 2003: 80). This kind of personal naming system is imposed and must not suffer changes, therefore it cannot be stated when referring to the popular system.

Any additional information and any change brought to the official system (adding of surnames, nicknames ecc.) make it become popular. Generally speaking, surnames outline a system of popular denomination and they have the tendency of replacing the official formula. In several locations surveyed, speakers / individuals are known only by their nickname or surname. The official system of denomination has been outlined on the basis of popular denomination (for example by using surnames added to the individual's name). A return to the popular system can be observed (by the above mentioned tendency

to use surnames in the detriment of using first name and last name) by renewing the connection with common nouns, making reference to certain semantic aspects by motivation.

In the official Dobroudjan denomination (as in the entire Romanian area, in fact), the basic element is the first name, which is sustained also by the initial position which it occupies. This is given by tradition to the newly born children (after the first name of the father or mother, after the first name of grandfather or grandmother, preserving the same anthroponymic forms within a certain family).

In the current period, in Dobroudja, tendency is to double or even to triple the individual first name (modern element) (Marin 2004). Thus, certain old names are also added foreign names (for instance, the last male name *Ioan* as in: *Ioan Oscar*, *Ioan-Alecsandru*, *Ioan-Alexander*, *Ioan-Antonio*, *Ioan-Carol*, *Ioan-Cezar*, *Ioan-Dorin-Augustus* ecc.), the unique last name being rarely assigned.

The second element of the denomination formula is represented by the last name, which might have a first name at its origins (*Constantin*, *Șerban*), a surname (*Crețu*, *Popa*), a hypocoristic (*Sandu*), a derivative (*Ioniță*), a patronym (*Popescu*) or a matronym (*Airinei*, *Amariet*) ecc. (Lazia 2003: 93; Tomici, Andronache 2005). The last name or the group name has the role to integrate individuals into a certain family, but also to differentiate the members of another families. According to frequency, the last names from Dobroudja are: in Constanta county (*Popa*, *Radu*, *Gheorghe*, *Popescu*, *Dumitru*, *Vasile*, *Munteanu* ecc.), while in Tulcea county (*Dumitru*, *Pavel*, *Munteanu*, *Constantin*, *Ion*, *Stan*, *Ene*, *Șerban* ecc.) (Marin 2005: 195; Tomici, Andronache 2005).

2. And in Tulcea county (as on to the entire Dobroudjan territory), the specific of the area is outlined by the amalgamation of allogenic populations (the Turks, the Tartars, the Russians, the Lipovans, the Bulgarians, the Germans, the Gagauzians, the Armenians, the Gypsies ecc.), but where native population remains constant. Evidence of the shepherds' existence is distinguished in the anthroponymy of the people's last name in Tulcea.

The specific terms for the professions of the Dobroudjans and Tulceans (shepherding, fishing, agriculture), but also specific dialect terms which find their anthroponymic representation through first names, last names or surnames (Lazia 2003:

128-129, 135-142; Tomici, Andronache 2005), for example: *canara* (< tc. *kanara* „stone quarry”) > names of people *Canarache*, *Canareica*, *Canavra*; *dam* (< tc. *dam* „stable”) > names of people *Damaceanu*, *Damache*, *Damo*, *Damoc*, *Damşescu*, *Damu*, *Damuş* ecc.

## **Chapter 2. The surnames in the onomastic system – theoretical approach**

The connection established between the subclasses of the Romanian anthroponymic system is a tripartite connection. Any of the three constitutive elements of personal denomination cannot function without the other (the last name without the surname or first name, the first name without the surname or the last name, the surname without the first name and the last name) reality which we shall attempt to underline in this chapter, insisting on the last category, the surname. In onomastic likewise, in linguistic generally, the language represents an interacting system of signs.

In the evolution of the discipline, the surname represents a class of own names less researched. The same notions are designated in anthroponymy by different terms, but our study is interested only on those onomastic classes which interrelate with the surname (first name, last name, toponyms) due to the exchange in the onomastic function. The study of surnames implies knowledge of different linguistic fields (morphology, semantics) and also non-linguistic (history, geography), aspect which is underlined in the previous chapter. This anthroponymic subclass cannot function outside elements of the same type, outside the other anthroponyms (first name and last name) or even toponyms, because the language is a dynamic and social system where, due to speaking, certain connections based forms are updated.

Surnames include nicknames<sup>1</sup> and they have been classified according to the number of holders in: individual and group surnames. According to origin, surnames are based on a common name, a patronym, a matronym, an andronym, a toponym, a zoonym ecc. and they can be divided in: delexical surnames, matronymic surnames, andronymic surnames, detoponymic surnames, dezoonymic surnames ecc. This false name (in the sense that it is not used in official denomination) is defining for a person and it designates those distinctive features of the individual. Seniority of surnames must be looked for

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<sup>1</sup> In certain papers, the distinction between surnames and nicknames is not made, and nicknames become anthroponyms when they change their function with the one of last name (Jordan 1983: 14-16).

approximately the same period as for the last name, since they have been used in the same period of time (the first forms of the same type appear in the South-Danubian onomastic in the centuries XI and XIII) (ELR 2006; Tomescu 2001: 53-57), for later to establish in the last name.

### **2.1. The connection between surnames and first names**

The first name (Christian or laic), as well as surnames, do not preserve the connection with the common name where they have started from. This significance gradually disappears, therefore anthroponyms manage to exceed the common names, case where they have formed, but that language also (Ionescu 1975: 11), becoming thus meta-linguistic elements which enable the construction of a new system – the anthroponymic system.

Therefore, the resemblance between the first name and the last name can also be of grammatical nature. The first name, just as surnames, specialize a series of male denomination (*Andrei, Ion, Doru*), one of female denomination (*Ana, Ioana*), and a series of forms for common subgender (*Irinel, Floricel*). When speaking about first names, the gender represents an additional element of anthroponymic individualization (Tomescu 1998: 35, 36) due to the forms of masculine or feminine. The masculine / feminine opposition can also be achieved by pairs, represented likewise by morphematic differences: *Ioan / Ioana, Marcel / Marcela* (Tomescu 1998: 44-45). The same happens for Tulcean Surnames: *Surdu / Surda*.

First name is being individualized by its singular form, thus it can be considered that this anthroponymic does not take part at the singular/ plural opposition (Tomescu 1998: 95). The same works for surnames. The plural forms for surnames are rarely met. The category of the number is strictly connected to the onomastic function of individualization and it names only one person. However, the category of first names receives also a plural form, but in this case, it works metaphorically (Tomescu 1998: 98), making reference to certain particularities (just as for surnames). Even if the last name does not take part at the opposition singular / plural, it can take the plural form, functioning as the common name where it started from.

For first names, just as for surnames and family names, the nominative case is distinctive for the onomastic denomination (Tomescu 1998: 146). Thus, oppositions between the nominative and the other cases (genitive, dative, accusative, vocative) are being made: the nominative of the last name is represented by a form unmarked through analogy with common names (Tomescu 1998: 148). The form, the articulated or non-articulated aspect of the last name does not need a compulsory context (Tomescu 1998: 150-151). Having at its origin common names, first names also achieve casual homonymy nominative – accusative – vocative and genitive – dative. Certain matronymic / andronymic / pathronymic surnames are fixed in the genitive form (*Al lui Tudorița, A lui Știrbu*), phenomenon which does not occur in the case of last name.

As for surnames (the first name also), the first name is also tied to a single person, being a distinctive sign of that individual, succeeding in differentiating him from a certain crowd, at a certain given time. The area where last names can manifest is wider than the one where the surname functions. The surname is used within the limits of a certain linguistic community and acquires meaning only in this situation. In terms of space manifestation, the surname approaches toponyms which are subordinated only to a certain place and they cannot overcome its borders.

## **2.2. The connection between surnames and last names**

The last name is fixed and hereditary, usually being paternally inherited (Ionescu 1975: 10). A common feature of last names and surnames is that they are inherited and not updated (Pătruț 1980: 27). Linguistic forms do not change, they stay the same, being transmitted from generation to generation (usually, by the father).

As found in the first chapter, most of the last names have at their origin surnames which have been preserved from previous generations, the forms being established in the official denomination (*Albu, Arbore, Boboc, Buzatu, Căldăraru, Căprioară, Chelu, Cocoș, Crețu, Sârbu, Turcu, Ursu* ecc.). The conclusion which can be reached is the same. Therefore, at the basis of the Romanian anthroponymic system was the neophilic, popular denomination, aspect which can be shown hereinafter.

Usually, last names have lost their connection with the common names, they have been desemnatized, lost their initial meaning. For example, the last name *Crețu*

(deonomastic, deanthroponymic form<sup>2</sup>) it does not mean it makes reference to an individual with this particularity, but to the fact that it was inherited from his father who wore the same name. Situated at the opposite side, surnames can still be semantically motivated according to the explanations of the informers. Thus, the nickname *Nebuna* refers to a person with these traits.

Last names (just as family names) go together with the people in a wider area, unlike surnames or nicknames, which are found in a more restricted area (that of a certain human community) (Iordan 1983: 16-17). In this regard, we can say that nicknames approach to toponyms, which are strictly related to an area. These names do not travel to much as far as the area is concerned since they are strictly related to the realities of the linguistic community and they function as such only into a certain social context.

Morphologically speaking, family names are subject to gender, number and case just as the first name and the last name (by analogy with the class of the common names). This onomastic subclass does not achieve oppositions of masculine or feminine genders and also series for a certain gender (Tomescu 1998: 54), as it achieves for first name and last name. A last name like *Ionescu* can designate both a person of masculine gender and one of feminine gender (by common / neuter sub-gender - Tomescu 1998: 55), even if the form it has is specific for the masculine.

As far as grammatical category of the number is concerned, family name has a specific form for the singular (Tomescu 1998: 106) (and makes reference to several people with this name) as well as for first name and last name. Unlike first name and surnames (except for the group surname), the singular form of the last name has three values (Tomescu 1998: 124-125): it indicates the name of the family member, it shows the name of just one person and it is also a last name. When it has a plural form (for example *Ioneștii*), it includes several people within a social or ethnic group – name of group (Tomescu 1998: 107). As it can be observed, the number category of the last name is achieved by analogy to that of common nouns (establishing the singular/ plural opposition).

The case category is defined in the same way, by establishing causal homonymies between the nominative, the accusative, the vocative and then between genitive and

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<sup>2</sup> Terms used in ELR 2006.

dative case (just as for the case of first names, surnames and implicitly common names) (Tomescu 1998: 196). Specific for onomastic grammar is the nominative form. Certain patronymic or matronymic surnames are fixed with the genitive form (*A lui Știrbu*), aspect which is noted in the case of family names derived from surnames (*Aioanei*, *Airinei*).

### **2.3. The connection between surnames and toponyms**

Adding information to the Romanian anthroponymic system can be achieved not only by patronym or surnames (for example), but also by adding a toponym (*Ghica-Deleni* refers to the fact that *Ghica* has a domain called *Deleni*; the name indicates the localization of the person) (Iordan 1983: 11), being acknowledged the fact that a frequent change / connection between anthroponymy and toponymy is being achieved (Toma 2002-2003: 187).

The unstable – stable report (Graur 1972: 6-8) can be applied to the two onomastic domains. The individual's names are more unstable (have as main factor determined by fashion and they disappear along with the people) than the ones for places, which persist in time. However, both anthroponyms and toponyms can be replaced by a human community or even by a single person.

Classes related to the name of the person are fewer (first name, last name and even surname), while the ones belonging to the names of places are several, according to the object which they designate (continent names, names of countries, towns, waters, mountains, municipalities, common names, names of states ecc.) (Graur 1972: 9; Toma 1983-1984). Once again, the connection between the toponym and the common name which is set at the basis of the name thus created is underlines.

Of the three elements belonging to the anthroponymic system presented in this chapter, surnames represent the most unstable subclass, since it can change according to the will of the speakers (it has transient character, it disappears with the individual, while toponyms are the most stable subclasses, since they persist in time).

Generally speaking, surnames refer to one individual and they have singularity as their distinctive characteristic (just one person with certain characteristics can be named *Plăcintăreasa* and distinguishes from a person called *Porumbița*, for example), while

toponyms to a extended space which includes other territories and which have plurality as a characteristic (*Constanța* names several localities).

### **Chapter 3. The surnames in Tulcea county**

#### **3.1. Tulcean surnames – general features**

3.1.1. In Tulcea county, the predominant ethnic groups are the Romanians, which demonstrates the continuity of autochthonous population on this territory mixed with allogenic elements. Analysis and interpretation of Romanian Tulcean surnames reflect the same specific Romanian anthroponym, registered on the entire territory of the country, with certain features characteristic for the socio-cultural specific of the zone.

Onomastic survey carried out contributed to rising an original material in the total amount of 423 surnames, of which 155 are surnames (36,64%), while 268 are nicknames (63,35%). We have considered that linguistic forms collected have the onomastic function of surnames only to the extent that they have lost their depreciatory note and they have been inherited from a family (but they are not family names or last names) or their function of nicknames only if they have an ironic, pejorative, offensive touch and they have disappeared in time. Most of the forms have only one antroponomastic function, either of surname or of nickname. However, certain forms have also the function of surname and nickname likewise (*Brânză* model).

The onomastic form of *Brânză* (Cerna, Luminița), which can be also of surname and nickname (in the order indicated by localities), assigned to a male person, having its origin in the feminine common name *brânză* „alimentary product produced by coagulation and milk processing” (DEX 1996), was motivated by the informant in the following way: [„this is how his grandfather was called, due to his profession” (and then passed to his nephew)] / [„he was dealing with shepherding, he was a cheese maker, he milked sheep”]. The first motivation referred to the surname function through inheritance of the form within the family, and the second motivation, to the nickname function due to its transient character, not necessary by ironic touch.

3.1.2. Saying a surname or a nickname is done in the absence of that person called, since the nickname constitutes an offense, depreciative or even offensive, by



reason of pejorative note, to the one having it. It happens quite often that saying a nickname does not generate pleasure to the ones having them.

Both surnames and nicknames are concise means of characterizing a person, having a quite extensive explanatory capacity, being defined as descriptive linguistic forms. If such forms become useless, they are subject to disappearance, being replaced by other forms. Therefore, at a given time, an individual can have two or even several surnames, such as: *Bughibală / Pughibală, Cămiloiu / Cornelius / Maimuță / Maimuțoi, Ciofu / Ciufu, Fasole / Fasolică, Pasăre rară / Udi, Primaru / Crăcănatu*.

Most proper names like these ones are masculine, the feminine forms being almost inexistent, a proof of the fact that women are not so strongly anchored into the social as men are. Thus, surnames have the effect on the social individual who lives within a community, manifesting his spirit of observation, his critical spirit, irony, depreciation, appreciation, admiration. These forms affectively marked are linguistic documents of lifestyle, having the richest anthroponymic content.

Nicknames and surnames are preserved best in the rural area and for the recollection of the elders, those being the most appropriate informants.

### **3.2. The classification of Tulcean surnames**

In our paper, the surnames registered can be grouped according to the following criteria:

1. Motivation criteria, which differentiates surnames motivated by unmotivated surnames;
2. Usage criteria, which separates common surnames (frequent, commonly used) from not used surnames (rare);
3. Origin criteria, which divides the surname in delexical surnames and deonomastic surnames (deanthroponymic / non-anthroponymic surnames, detoponymic / non-toponymic surnames, dezoonymic / non- zoonymic surnames ecc.).

3.2.1. In the survey carried out in Tulcea county, we have registered 423 gathered surnames, of which, most of them being motivated, that is 358 (84,63%), and the rest of 65 surnames being unmotivated / non-motivated (15,36%).

a) Motivated surnames, generally group, surnames which have received explanations from the investigated subjects.

*Barbút* (Baia), surname given to a man, forms the nominative < neutral common noun *barbut* „gamble dice game”: [„Gică plays craps”].

b) Unmotivated surnames are those surnames which we have received no explanation for from informants, but whom we have attempted to indicate the etymon, sometime with the help of other informers, whom we have addressed additional questions related to the surname.

*Cioaşcă* (Traian), nickname given to a man, nominative form < probably common feminine name *cioască* „(regionalism) toad”; / < the feminine noun *ţoaşcă* „nipple, dummy”; / < the adverb *ţoşcă* „(regionalism) cramped”; / < the feminine noun *ţoşcă* „bag, handbag, satchel”. [The subject speaker has not explained the name, but it is closer to the form of the noun *cioască*.]

Both motivated and unmotivated surnames can be grouped according to their origin form, which can be: common name, anthroponym, toponym.

3.2.2. Depending on the use of surnames, we classify Tulcean surnames in used / usual common forms (frequent, commonly used) and unused / unusual (rare, isolated) (see Surname index). The surnames used have at their basis words from the fundamental vocabulary (*Bujor, Lupu, Muscă* ecc.), and the unused ones from words belonging to the vocabulary mass (*Bălălău, Chiostec* ecc.).

Out of the 423 surnames, those with the lowest percentage are common – 190 surnames, representing 44,91% of all. Uncommon surnames represent most of them, that is 233 surnames – 55,08 % of all.

3.2.3. According to their origin, Tulcean surnames can be classified in:

1. delexical surnames, derived from common names (*Brânză* model);

2. Deonomastic surnames, derived from proper names:

- deanthroponymic surnames which are based on a proper name / anthroponym (*Mandela* model);

- detoponymic surnames which are based on the name of a place / toponym (*Hogea* model);

- dezoonymic surnames, formed from the name of an animal / zoonym (*Udi* model);
- surnames coming from a movie name (*State* model) ecc.

3.2.3.1. *Delexical surnames* are those surnames whose sources are elements from the vocabulary of the language. These kinds of surnames represent most of the gathered material, counting 358 and representing 84,63% of the total surnames. According to common nouns set as surnames, the latter can be classified as follows:

- a) lexical-semantic fields of the basic common name;
- b) morphological structure of the basic common name;
- c) grammatical features of the basic common name;
- d) applicability of surname (reference to a person or several).

Delexical / non-lexical surnames can be also regrouped according to their official or popular denominative formula.

## **Chapter 4. Semantic and morphological aspects of surnames denomination in Tulcea county**

### **4.1. Semantic features**

The analysis of semantic features of proper names refers to the connection between the meanings of common names and the surnames motivation. A surname motivation represents the explanation an informer gives to a certain name.

Considering the connection between the meaning of common name and motivation, we have the following situations:

1. Surnames of which motivation takes the meaning of common name entirely (*Blonda* type): the nickname *Blonda* (Caugagia) attributed to a woman uses the meaning of the feminine form of the adjective *blondă* „(about hair) of fair colour, yellow; (used as a noun) person with fair hair and skin” (DEX 1996): [“that she is blonde”]. The surname motivation takes the meaning of the base word.

2. Surnames of which motivation refers only to a semantic feature from the meaning of the common name (*Cămiloiu* type): in the nickname *Cămiloiu* (Tulcea), if we take into consideration the motivation given by the informer, we find a common name *cămilă* / *camel* and the augmentative suffix *-oi* with onomastic function that gives a

negative note. Adding this suffix makes the word become unusual *cămiloi* and the morpheme / the definite article *-u(l)* individualizes a certain individual: [*“Cămiloiu is big and strong and works in a construction area, carrying heavy things all day long.”*]. The common noun *cămilă* is: “1. A humped, long-necked ruminant mammal from North Africa and Asia, domesticated in desert regions as a beast of burden and as a source of wool, milk, and meat. 2. A device used to raise sunken objects, consisting of a hollow structure that is submerged, attached tightly to the object, and pumped free of water.” (DEX 1996). Using the first meaning of the common word, the person named this way is seen as a beast of burden.

3. Surnames of which motivation is opposite to the meaning of the base word (*Frumosu* type): the word at the nickname base *Frumosu* (Dăeni) expresses an opposite meaning, being given ironically. In the dictionary, the adjective *frumos* / *beautiful* is explained this way: “that is pleasurable, that has aesthetic value” (DEX 1996). The motivation of this nickname uses the meaning of its antonym: [*“he is not beautiful”*] but ugly.

4. Surnames of which motivation takes a proper meaning of the base word (*Crăcănatu* type): the adjective *crăcănat* “with bow legs” (DEX 1996) + the definite article *-u(l)* > the nickname *Crăcănatu*.

5. Surnames of which motivation uses a figurative meaning of the base word (*Robotu* type): the surname *Robotu* (Baia) refers to a “person that works hard without understanding the meaning of his work” (DEX 1996). This figurative meaning is explained by the informer: [*“Uncle Mihai Robotu is limping and works a lot, like a robot.”*].

## 4.2. Morphological features

4.2.1. From the morphological structure point of view, the Tulcean surnames can be classified after:

1. the structure of the origin form / source word (surnames originated in simple forms (*Butelie* type) / derivative forms (*Butoiaș* type) / compound forms (*Mam-mare* type) / phrasal form of the etymon (*N-aude-nu-vede* type));

2. the structure of the resulted surname (simple surnames (*Ciumpoi* type) / productive derivated surnames (*Vitrineanu* type) or back-formed surnames (*Zgârcă* type)).

4.2.2. If we refer to the part of speech (used in a certain situation with proper or figurative meaning) from which a surname comes, then we have the following situations:

a) surnames originated in common nouns (*Aspersor* type): *Aspersor* < the common noun *aspersor*;

b) surnames originated in adjectives (*Barosanu* type): *Barosanu* < the adjective in the masculine form *barosan*;

c) surnames originated in verbs (*Frecea* type): *Frecea* < the verb *a freca* (from expression);

d) surnames originated in interjections (*Bâști* type): *Bâști* < the interjection *bâști*.

4.2.3. The classification of surnames takes into consideration the grammatical features of the origin form (of the etymon) and of the resulted onomastic form (of the surname).

a) Considering the gender of the etymon, surnames can be classified into:

a1. surnames formed from masculine common nouns (*Bărbieru* type);

a2. surnames formed from feminine common nouns (*Blonda* type);

a3. surnames formed from neuter common nouns (*Chibrit* type).

b) Considering the gender of the resulted onomastic form, we can distinguish:

b1. Masculine surnames (assigned to a male) (*Barbut* type);

b2. Feminine surnames (assigned to a female) (*Dogoarea* type).

4.2.4. The surnames originated in common nouns or in adjectives (and these are the most frequent situations) may be classified by gender taking into account that the surname gender is given by the sex of the person to which is assigned. The gender of the etymon is that indicated in the dictionary.

The gender of surnames is represented by male forms (398 masculine surnames, that is equivalent to 94,08% of the total amount) and a few female forms (25 feminine surnames, that is equivalent to 5,91% of the total amount).

When using the definite article, the anthroponyms are additionally individualized. In the absence of this morpheme, the individualization is achieved by using dependent or independent lexical morphemes.

The number of this type of anthroponyms is expressed in the distinction between singular and plural forms.

Most types of surnames originate in singular forms, 409 surnames, representing 96,69% of the collected surnames. The singular (*Vapor* type) is connected to the individualization anthroponymic function, representing the unique individual. In the same way, also the last names manifest. Therefore, all singular surnames may be the source of last names.

The plural forms (the collective ones) from which the surnames come are very few (14 surnames, representing 3,30%), approaching the last names (referring to multiple individuals belonging to the same family) and being marked by the inflexion *-i* (*Țuțuieni* type) or by the invariable article *alde*, which refers to a collectivity (*De-alde Frumosu, D-alde vai*). The forms with the inflexion *-i* approach the official formula and the forms with the article *alde* or the possessive article *al* + the definite article placed ahead *lui* underline an unofficial denomination formula.

The surnames case presents homonymy for nominative – accusative – vocative case and genitive – dative case.

Most of the anthroponyms belong to the first causal homonymy (419 surnames – 99,05%) and it is represented by the inflexions and morphemes shown above (*Aspersor* type). Some of these forms are specific to the vocative case (*Patroane* type).

The homonymy between genitive and dative case is poorly represented, only 4 surnames, that is equivalent to 0,94% of the total (*A lui Zdreamță, A lui Șoarece, A lui Vacă, Zeul apelor* using the possessive article *a*, the definite article placed ahead *lui* or after the noun *-lor*).

## Chapter 5. Final considerations

1. The Tulcean registered surnames outline a distinctive class of onomastic forms of first names and last names on the level of bearers' understanding as well as on the level of the informer who knows these names.

2. The surnames create a supplementary or additionally onomastic system that functions on rural level as an identification and individualization system independent of the official one formed by first and last name.

3. The surnames belong to popular onomastics reflecting beliefs and specific mentality connected to the personal denomination.

4. The surname occupies the third position in the Romanian denominative formula after the first and last name as a supplementary individualization name. There are three situations of positioning surnames beside the official person's name (first name + last name): the surname doubles the mixed name (*Iliaș Grecu Tâmplaru* type); the surname doubles the last name (*Dobre Roșu* type); the surname substitutes the mixed name or the last name (*Rugină* type). The third mentioned situation is frequently used and the first two possibilities are rarely used.

5. The Tulcean surnames represent a dynamic and quite rich inventory (423 surnames) well attached to the local tradition which has the tendency to function as a parallel denomination of the person.

6. The Tulcean surnames show certain characteristics determined by the social context in which they appear, Tulcea county being an area of ethnic mixture, in which the Romanian element is the most important even if it was influenced along times by foreign populations. These nations find anthroponymic representation in Tulcean surnames.

The Tulcean specific mark is rendered by regional, dialectical and popular terms that constitute the foundation for development of a wide range of Romanian surnames.

7. The collected Tulcean surnames have the anthroponomastic function of surname (155 surnames, representing 36,64%; *Căpitanu* type) or nickname (268 surnames, representing 63,35%; *Gâscă* type). Therefore, most of the surnames have nickname function (the ironical and deprecating meaning associated with the bearer is kept and disappears once the person dies) and fewer forms have surname function (the deprecating meaning is lost and they are inherited along generations in the same family).

8. Considering the surname motivation, surnames may be classified into: motivated surnames (358 surnames, representing 84,63%; *Chioru* type) and non-motivated surnames (65 surnames, representing 15,36%; *Boboloc* type). Most of these forms are semantically motivated by the informer.

9. If we consider the usage criterion, the Tulcean surnames can be classified into usual (frequently used) surnames (190 surnames, representing 44,91%; *Bujor* type) and unusual (rarely used) surnames (233 surnames, representing 55,08%; *Punghiță* type).

10. Most of the surnames are masculine forms (398 surnames, representing 94,08%; *Crețu* type) and very few feminine forms (25 surnames, representing 5,91%; *Blonda* type).

11. The surnames of Tulcea county belong to the general Romanian surnames with 3 subtypes: non-lexical surnames, non-anthroponymic surnames, non-toponymic surnames.

12. According to the performed analysis, non-lexical surnames have the highest frequency in the anthroponymy of Tulcea county (358 surnames, representing 84,63% of the Tulcean surnames).



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