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“THE DYNAMISM OF DOBROGENE SURNAMES IN THE CURRENT PERIOD”

THESIS SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

The present paper aims to describe the prenominational system in Dobrogea in the current period. The research covered the time interval 2017-2019 and the year 2024, because they are representative of the dynamism of the onomastic forms assigned at present, compared to previous periods in which there are statistical data regarding the frequency of names (Bolocan 1999, Marin 2004). The subject of the thesis is relevant considering the current situation of Romanian and foreign onomastics marked by the change of the inventory and the order of frequency.

Throughout its evolution, the anthroponymic system goes through moments of change in which some denominative forms are replaced by others for various reasons, such as socio-cultural context, fashion and imitation. Gaining the right to freedom of expression after 1989 had as a consequence the expansion of the possibilities of choosing the structure of the assigned first names.

In the contemporary period, a change in the interest of parents regarding denomination is observed. Thus, the current trends are to avoid traditional Romanian anthroponyms, based on calendar religious onomastics, to show an increased interest in foreign first names and to increase the number of first name terms for its individualization.

We consider that the novelty of the work is given by establishing the frequency of first names in the Dobrudja area in different periods and by comparing these data with the frequency studies of first names from previous periods: 1999 and 2004. The originality of the work consists in establishing the relationship between traditional religious and secular first names and new first names or onomastic innovations (borrowed and created).

The denominative system in Dobrogea has its own particularities, because the Dobrogean onomastics reflects the coexistence of different populations presented in the 2011 census data, which reflects a multicultural and multiethnic space. Names and surnames constitute in any culture a way of individualization, are characterized by general features that are found in a large area, but also present specific elements that differentiate it. Some surnames are common throughout the country, while others are identified only in certain areas or have a singular appearance. Over time, the relationships between these surnames can change: often, surnames migrate with the population, sometimes, for various reasons, surnames are subject to mutations and radical renewals conditioned by social, cultural or other factors. Considering the multi-millennium history of these places, we consider that the Dobrudja anthroponymic model has a pronounced heteroclite character, due to the fusion of different ethnic elements: Albanians, Armenians, Bulgarians,

Circassians, Greeks, Tatars, Turks, etc. Each population brought with itself elements of its own mentality, customs and language, thus contributing to the enrichment of the autochthonous anthroponomic structures, a fact that ensures its specificity.

ANTHROPONYMY IN DOBROGEA

Our scientific research approach provides an image of the dynamism of first names in Dobrogea by comparing it with information on the frequency of first names in this area, at the national level (Bolocan 1999) and at the Dobrogean regional level (Marin 2004). Also, this paper analyzes the dynamics of first names in Dobrogea during 2017-2019 and 2024 based on frequency, number of terms, secular-religious, masculine-feminine opposition.

Our paper aims to identify the specifics of Dobrogean anthroponymy, at the level of first names used in the current period, which gives it a special, unique structure.

The general objectives of the paper are:

- creating a corpus of first names officially registered (by the Population Registry Service) in Dobrogea during 2017-2019 and a corpus of first names assigned and declared at birth (at Armonia Hospital in Constanta) in 2024;
- establishing the relationships of the Romanian repertoire with the anthroponymy of the various nationalities on the Dobrogea territory.
- studying the Romanian primary denomination system in the current perspective;
- analyzing the particularities of the inventory of personal names in regional distribution;

The specific objectives of the thesis are:

- researching first names from the point of view of belonging to different onomastic systems;
- analyzing the dynamics of anthroponymic denomination in a historical and cultural moment characterized by linguistic and onomastic globalization, by changing denominative preferences in the selection of first names, due to the excessive modernization of the name register;
- comparing the frequency of current Dobrogean surnames with those in the general Romanian repertoire;
- identifying borrowings from inside and outside the Dobrogean space, within the phenomena of onomastic globalization;

- researching the main traditional fund of surnames in the Romanian language based on oppositions: religious names - secular names, borrowings from Slavic, Turkish - modern borrowings from French, English;
- establishing the relations of the Romanian repertoire with the anthroponymy of the various nationalities on the Dobrogean territory.

The documentary corpus of the thesis was compiled based on both direct and indirect sources. The direct sources are the lists of first names made available by the General Directorate of Personal Records in Constanța and Tulcea counties (for the years 2017, 2018, 2019), the Armonia Hospital maternity hospital in Constanța for the year 2024, the internet. We sorted the received lists according to the number of terms specialized in the masculine and feminine denominations, respectively. Within each denominative series, we selected the single first names and their distribution across the two counties and for the entire Dobrogea region, the double first names, differentiated by their structure (first and second position within it), which reflect the denominative preferences of the donors, as well as the triple first names, also analyzed according to the structure (initial, median and final position). Multiple surnames, present in the pattern of the primary Romanian denomination, were not identified in the corpus we had available.

The first names extracted from the official lists were ordered according to the frequency criterion, thus establishing their rank within the hierarchy of their denominative circulation in the time interval proposed for analysis. For the period 2024, in the absence of data from the General Directorate of Personal Records, we used the data provided by the Armonia Hospital maternity hospital regarding the names of newborns. The denominative lists made from this recent information were extensive enough to be subjected to partial statistical analyses.

To record current denominative trends, we used some sources that we consulted on the internet, which present lists of first names proposed to future parents in the period 2017-2019 (the website numedecopii.com) and 2024 (the website parintisipitici.ro). These sites reflect quite well the general trends in onomastics, since they are consulted by denominators and represent sources of inspiration for them.

The indirect sources are lexicographic, more precisely, Romanian onomastic dictionaries, as well as some general onomastic studies. Constantinescu (1963) provides useful information in establishing the etymology of first names, their denominative families, their relationship to other onomastic systems and the historical distribution of first names. Ionescu (1975) presents Romanian

first names, especially modern ones, in relation to those from other denominative systems. For religious first names, the information regarding the initial meaning of some first names (Petrache 1998), the use and spreading of hagiographic and martyrological names (Bălan Mihailovici 2003) was of significant use. We also used data regarding the circulation of mythological names as a source of scholarly inspiration for the repertoire of traditional and modern first names (Chiriacescu 2012).

To establish the historical distribution of traditional names, our work used the diachronic description of the Romanian anthroponymic system in its various stages of development (Tomescu 2001). The quantitative and frequency analyses of current Dobrogean surnames benefited from specialized onomastic studies, considered statistical benchmarks at the national level (Bolocan 1998), respectively, regional level (Marin 2004).

In socio-human research, the term research has different meanings. In a broad sense, it is used as a statistical, dialectical method, etc., sometimes it has a more restricted meaning of "observation, investigation", etc. The classification of research methods is made according to various criteria: the temporal criterion, the reactivity criterion, the intrinsic characteristics of the method, the place and role occupied in the research process, the research goals.

Statistical research can be summarized as a record of objects or phenomena, made concrete by tables such as those that track the frequency of a first name, the number of terms by which the first name is individualized, secular or religious origin, etc. Statistical research can have a complete aspect when it is possible to determine the evolution of the phenomenon studied in relation to its different variations observed experimentally. Without a doubt, such general results must be confronted with reality, the field of anthroponymy being a dynamic, open one, subject to cultural, social and historical influences.

In the research we propose, the comparative method is extremely useful. Thus, after synthesizing and systematizing statistical information, following the socio-cultural evolution in this space, we will obtain a conclusive image of the trends and changes in the current Dobrogean anthroponymic system. By analyzing and processing the information obtained from research sources and structuring them in accordance with the general and specific objectives, we identified the newly registered names in Dobrogean anthroponymy, we conducted a study of the frequency and stability of first names, names that disappeared from Dobrogean anthroponymy, replaced by borrowings, Romanian creations, etc.

The research methods used are adequate to achieve the objectives of the thesis. Through the selective method, we identified the corpus of first names representative of the evolution of Dobrogea anthroponymy in the current period.

In the research approach of the dynamics of new first names, we followed the following procedure:

- making an inventory of first names assigned to newborns in the period 2017-2019;
- making an inventory of the corpus of first names from the period 01.01.2024-31.08.2024;
- classifying first names according to the number of occurrences in single, double and triple forms;
- identifying first names in onomastic dictionaries, their origin and meaning;
- comparing the frequency figure of first names from the thesis corpus inventory with that from general statistics (Bolocan 1999) and Dobrogea regional statistics (Marin 2004);
- classifying first names according to the criterion of gender (masculine or feminine) and source of inspiration (religious or secular);
- by statistical method, establishing the percentage of the presence of the first name in Dobrogea;
- tracking the dynamics of the first name in each year studied, in each county and at the level of Dobrogea, by reporting to the demographic structure and the number of inhabitants, as well as to the total number of first names assigned each year;
- identifying new first names;
- identifying first names that are not present in the general anthroponymy (Bolocan 1999), but which are present in Dobrogea during the period studied.

The terminology used in this paper is specific to the field. Tomescu (2013) creates a corpus of terminology specific to onomastics, identifies the origin of the terms and their correspondences in European linguistics, and defines the meaning of these terms in the field of Romanian linguistics.

The personal name, anthroponym or onomastic form represents any proper name that defines, identifies and individualizes a person. The generic term proper name with the simplified variant name, present in most modern languages, has its origin in Latin *nomen proprium* / *nomen*. The proper name has the role of identifying and individualizing objects. According to what it names (denoted), the proper name is classified into: first name, family name, surname, etc.

(Tomescu 2001: 386). “As a hyperonym, the generic term proper name / name refers to the corresponding hyponyms, which fall into a double synonymous series, made up of Romanian creations (possibly *calculi*) and borrowed neological terms: personal name / anthroponym” (Tomescu 2013: 264). In the composition of some terms borrowed from the French language, the author identifies the Greek element of composition –onym < fr. –onyms, which are repeated in series. (Tomescu 2013: 264)

The notion of baptismal name is partly synonymous with the neologism of first name, because the first name exceeds the scope of the baptismal name and the baptismal name is not always the first name in official documents registering a newborn. The term first name requires the presence of a surname “the only Romanian term for the second system of identification and individualization of the person.” (Tomescu 2013: 265)

First name refers to any name of individualization of the person that, together with the surname, unifies the referent. “The surname is understood as the name of a person that indicates belonging to a family through direct or indirect kinship; the second meaning is that of a collective name of persons between whom there are kinship relations.” (Tomescu 2013: 265). A hypocoristic is a name formally modified, through phonetic procedures or through truncations of the initial form.

The single first name represents the inventory unit made up of a single form that names a person. Together with the family name, the first name forms the legal way of recognizing an individual, with all the legal rights and obligations. The double first name is made up of two terms through which the official identification of the individual is achieved, by joining the family name. The triple and multiple first names have in their composition three, respectively more terms through which, together with the family name, a person is legally identified.

The structuring of the research material was carried out according to the purpose of the denomination into masculine and feminine first names, from the point of view of the denominative type into single first names, double first names, triple first names and multiple first names. From the point of view of the circulation of first names, we established frequency ranks for single first names, double first names and triple first names from the studied onomastic inventory.

From the point of view of onomastic typology, the registered first names have the following distribution: religious first names and secular first names. Religious first names include biblical forms, calendar names (hagiographic and martyrological), names of religious holidays and names

related to some cult elements. Secular first names are borrowed from other onomastic systems, delexical first names and invented names. Recently borrowed first names include denominative units taken from the onomastic system of other languages, which are not registered in the Romanian onomastic inventory.

In our work we use a typology of first names resulting from the synthesis of classifications from onomastic works, taking into account the criterion of the origin of the first names, the denominative destination and the formal structure.

From the point of view of origin, first names are grouped into:

A) religious first names;

A1. biblical first names;

A2. hagiographic / calendar first names.

B) secular first names:

B1. Romanian creations;

B2. borrowings.

From the point of view of denominative destination, first names are:

A) masculine first names;

B) feminine first names.

From the point of view of form, first names are:

A) single first names: simple forms, derived forms (diminutive, hypocoristic, truncated), compound first names;

B) double first names;

C) triple first names;

D) multiple first names.

In our approach, we used the typologies of surname classification, following these criteria according to the needs of the analysis.

The thesis is structured according to the general objectives and the specific objectives that we proposed.

The introduction includes general considerations in which the socio-cultural context of Dobrogea is presented, geographical data and historical information regarding Dobrogea, in order to identify the elements that individualize this region. Data from the 2011 Population Census regarding Dobrogea are analyzed, in order to specify the demographic structure of the area,

emphasizing diversity, multi- and interculturality. Next, we specified the objectives of the thesis, the stage of research on the topic, the sources of the work, the methodology of the scientific research, specifying the methods used, the procedure that we followed, the terminology used and the structure of the work.

In the first chapter we aimed to present the studied anthroponymic material, the denomination, the traditions related to baptism and the attribution of the first name, classifications of first names from the specialized literature. Based on the presented classifications, we created a typology of first names considering the criteria of the origin of first names, the denominative destination and the formal structure.

The second chapter presents the official statistics of the regionalization of Romania and the demographic structure of Dobrogea, by reference to the administrative division of 1998. The studied anthroponymic material is statistically analyzed on the criteria of the masculine-feminine distribution, by the number of terms that make up the first name, the evolution of the number and distribution of first names in consecutive years, percentages and graphs to illustrate the dynamics of the denominative system both in Dobrogea and in Constanța County and Tulcea County.

Also, the male first names in the corpus of first names from the period 2017-2019 were analyzed according to the number of terms in the composition of the denominative structures, the presences of the first names were identified, the hierarchy was created, establishing the rank of each first name according to the number of appearances in the given period. The male first names were divided into three frequency groups: high, medium and low.

We identified the first 10 male first names in dictionaries and established their etymology and first documentary attestations. Next, we followed the distribution in the two counties and at the level of the area of both the unique forms and the distribution of first names as a term in the composition of the double and triple first names. We compared the number of occurrences with those in the general statistics from 1999 and with the Dobrogea statistics from 2004. We followed the joining of first names in the double and triple denominative forms according to the following criteria: religious first names, secular first names, borrowed or recent first names, the evolution of double and triple forms in consecutive years, the presence of double first names with a frequency greater than 10, in order to establish their fixation at the level of the Dobrogea anthroponymic system. We noted the representativeness of the studied corpus and continued the analysis with five more male first names from the medium frequency group, in order to establish the trends of the

male denominative system from 2017-2019. We continued the analysis with male first names from the low-frequency group and drew some conclusions on the dynamics of masculine denominative forms.

In the analysis of the corpus of female first names, we followed the same criteria as the masculine ones: the high frequency group includes 6 first names, and in the medium frequency group we analyzed 9 first names.

The third chapter includes the analysis of the first names assigned to newborns in 2004. Their analysis followed the criteria applied to the corpus of first names from the period 2017-2019. Thus, we made a comparison of the corpus of first names from the period 2017-2019 with that from 2024, in order to follow the dynamics of the Dobrogea denomination throughout the studied period (the evolution of the denominative system before and after the pandemic period).

In the fourth chapter, we wanted to verify the influence of the Internet on the decisions of some parents regarding the choice of first name. We selected a site with suggestive names numedecopii.com from which we selected the first names proposed in the period 2017-2019 and the site parentisipitici.ro for the first names from 2004. We compared these first name corpuses with the denominative units from the Dobrogean corpus from the same period.

The conclusions of the research include the results of the scientific approach and proposals for new directions for approaching the Dobrogean anthroponymic system.

The corpus we analyzed includes the first names officially assigned to the civil status, registered alongside the family name in the birth certificate, an essential administrative act for the identification and exercise of a person's civil rights. The corpus of first names from Constanța County was released by the Population Registration Service in Constanța in June 2020 and includes 22,791 first names, the one from Tulcea County was transmitted by the Population Registration Service in Tulcea in 2020 and contains 5,895 first names. The data we study consists of the 28,686 official first names registered in documents during the period 2017-2019 in Dobrogea, as well as a corpus of 414 new first names assigned in 2024.

The inventory of given names assigned in the years 2017-2019, supplemented with data from 2024, are compared with the latest statistics of given names published in Romanian onomastics (Bolocan 1999, Marin 2004). We followed the renewal of vocabulary, the change in denominative preferences, the increase or decrease in the frequency of certain given names in the

four periods, as well as the tendency to preserve traditional given names with wide circulation throughout the history of Romanian civilization.

CONCLUSIONS

One aspect of the modernization of Dobrogean anthroponymy is the increase in the number of given names assigned to an individual. During the period 2017–2019, the proportion of double given names shows a significant rise compared to the 1999 statistics, increasing from 40% to 72.72%. In addition, triple given names, which were rare in 1999, account for 2.08% in the period under analysis. This trend represents a break with tradition and constitutes a means of adaptation to the current socio-cultural context.

Based on the statistical data inventoried at the level of the Dobrogea region during the period under study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

In comparison with the 1999 inventory of given names, in the current period, out of the 113 male given names with a national frequency exceeding 10,000 occurrences (the frequencies for the current period being indicated in parentheses after each given name), 24 denominative units (21.23%) have disappeared: Grigor(i)e (rank 49), Florea (50), Nicula(i)e (59), Costică (61), Zoltan (68), Dorel (72), Istvan (73), Toader (75), Gavril (80), Sandor (87), Laszlo (88), Costache (93), Cristinel (94), Ludovic (97), Nelu (98), Carol (100), Stan (103), Arpad (104), Jozsef (108), Levente (113), Gelu (115), Maricel (116), Gavrilă (117), Romeo (119).

By comparison with the 1999 inventory, in the current period, out of the 150 female given names with a national frequency exceeding 10,000 occurrences, 30 denominative units (20%) have disappeared: Floarea (rank 7), Viorica (10), Eugenia (21), Marioara (32), Anica (33), Lenuța (43), Rozalia (45), Gheorghîța (55), Lucreția (57), Anișoara (73), Gherghina (76), Susana (78), Virginia (79), Domnica (85), Aneta (89), Olga (91), Marcela (95), Stela (103), Maricica (105), Rada (107), Terezia (108), Valerica (111), Paulina (119), Gina (129), Tinca (132), Geta (138), Stanca (139), Nastasia (143), Leontina (149), Anuța (150).

The male given name with the highest frequency at the national level in 1999 was Gheorghe, which currently occupies rank 86, while at the level of Dobrogea, the most frequent male given name in 1999 was Ion, currently ranked 82.

The female given name with the highest frequency both nationally and in Dobrogea in 1999 was Maria, a given name that continues to occupy rank 1 in Dobrogea.

The most frequent male given name currently recorded in Dobrogea is Andrei, which occupied rank 24 in the national statistics of 1999.

The most frequent secular male given name recorded in Dobrogea is Darius, which occupies rank 12 regionally, while at the national level it falls within the category of given names with 3,795 occurrences. The most frequent secular female given name in Dobrogea is Amalia, ranked 15 regionally, while in the 1999 national statistics it is recorded with 9,780 occurrences.

There is continuity in Dobrogean naming practices in the current period, as a significant number of male and female given names display diachronic stability.

We consider that the present research can be further developed by correlating the regional-level findings with a nationwide analysis, which would confirm the current trends of renewal within the Dobrogean anthroponymic system.