

# ON THE ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF TOPONYMY ON THE TERRITORY OF ROMANIA

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**Der Ursprung und die historische Entwicklung der Ortsnamen auf dem Territorium Rumäniens.** Beginnend mit dem Eisernen Zeitalter (La Tène), seit wann man mit Genauigkeit weiss, dass auf dem heutigen Territorium Rumäniens die Thraker wohnten, lebten hier verschiedene Bevölkerungen, die schließlich zu der Entstehung des rumänischen Volkes beigetragen haben. Dementsprechend treffen sich mehrere Kategorien von Ortsnamen, und zwar: vor-indoeuropäischen, indoeuropäischen (thrako-geto-dakischen, lateinischen, griechischen, slavischen, rumänischen und deutschen), türkischen (petschenego-kumanischen und türkisch-osmanischen) und ugro-finnischen (ungarischen) Ursprungs. Zu diesen kommen noch die jüngsten Ortsnamen hinzu, die von Wissenschaftler (buchmäßige Ortsnamen, insbesondere Regionen) oder von der Verwaltung (Siedlungsnamen) gegeben wurden. So wie man sehen kann, wurden diese Ortsnamen nicht nur von der rumänischen autochthonen Bevölkerung gegeben, sondern auch von den Bevölkerungen, die von anderen Orten hierher gekommen sind, und die diese Sprachen auf dem Territorium Rumäniens geredet haben. Man muss auch die Tatsache bemerken, dass alle Ortsnamen eine genaue Bedeutung haben, sind also übersetzbar, abhängig von ihrem Ursprung, die man in den über 5 000 Arbeiten zu finden kann, die in Rumänien und im Ausland veröffentlicht wurden.

It is precisely known that as early as the Iron Age (La Tène), the territory of present-day Romania was inhabited by the Thracians, and by other populations which eventually led to the formation of the Romanian people. Toponymy preserves specific traces of each of them. That would explain the existence of various categories of place-names: pre-Indo-European, Indo-European (Thracian-Geto-Dacian, Latin, Greek, Byzantine, Slav, Romanian and German), Turkish (Petcheneg-Cumanian and Osmali-Turkish), as well as the Finno-Ugric (Hungarian) ones. In addition, there are toponyms recently created by scientists (bookish, mostly regionyms), or by the administration (oikonyms – settlement names). It is obvious, therefore, that place-names have not been assigned by the autochthonous Romanians alone, but also by the other in-coming populations, who spoke their native languages when settling on Romanian territory. It should be remembered that toponyms have an exact meaning, so that they are translatable in terms of their origin (Conea 1960), which for some places is still unknown, or could not be found yet in those nearly 5,000 toponymic works published in Romania and abroad.

## 1.1. PRE-INDO-EUROPEAN TOPONYMS

These toponyms include outstanding geographical names in Romania, such as the *Danube* and the *Carpathians*. These are the legacy of the Central and East-European populations who had lived in these places during the 3<sup>rd</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> millennia B.C., names preserved by the Thracians. Originally, they had simply been elementary terms (appellatives): *Danube* = running water, *Carpathians* = rocks, mountain. Given their antiquity, the original meaning was lost, or forgotten, being used today as proper names that have no other significance for the population.

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Linguistics (Ivănescu 1958) established the origin of the hydronym *Danube* by comparing the root *Dun-* in Romanian (*Dunăre*) with the Slavic *Dunav* and *Don* from the Thracian Donaris, the German *Donau* and with other names from Eastern Europe: *Don* in *Don*, *Danapris* in the *Dnieper*, *Danastris* in the *Dniester* and scores of other hydronyms found in Northern Caucasus and ending in *-don*: *Ghizeldon*, *Sadon*, *Haznidon*, *Urson*, *Fiadgon*, etc.

In Antiquity, the oronym *Carpathian* was used by Ptolemy (2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.). It derives from an Illyro-Thracian (hence Dacian, too) appellative: *Karpate*, established by analogy with the present Albanian word *Karpe* = rock, with an ancient plural. The term *Karpate*, meaning mountains in general, lived with the Dacians as long as the Dacian language existed. After undergoing a process of Romanization, the Dacians would forget it and replace it with *monte* (>Rom. *munte*). The Romanian people became familiar with it only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, being used in books, and in schools after the German cartographer Mercator (16<sup>th</sup> century) concocted the form *Carpathus Mons*.

## 1.2. OLD INDO-EUROPEAN TOPONYMS

These toponyms are dated approximately to the 7<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> cc B.C., basically from the moment peoples lived within a certain territory and had a well-outlined language. The following place-names have been identified in terms of oldness and importance:

**1.2.1. Thraco-Geto-Dacian toponyms** come from our ancestors called Dacians by the Romans and Getae by the Greeks, both peoples belonging to the large group of the Thracians. In Book V, Chap. 3, Herodotus, the “father of history” says that they are “the most numerous and most widely spread people in the world after the Indians” (*Istoria Românilor*, I, 2001, p. 401). The Thracians populated the north-eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula, part of Central and Eastern Europe between the Azov Sea and the Dnieper in the east, the Forested Carpathians and the Beskids Mountains in the north, the middle course of the Danube up to Vienna and hence farther southwards to the Adriatic Sea in the West. Also, important enclaves lived in Asia Minor and in the Aegean Sea islands.

The existence of these toponyms is known today from Greek and Roman writings belonging to various periods of Antiquity. Some of them have lived on this day in a slightly changed form. It is the case of certain big water courses, in which the initial etymon is easily recognizable, e.g. from north to south and from east to west: Tisa < *Tisia*, Someș < *Samus*, Criș < *Crisia*, Ampoi < *Ampee*, Mureș < *Marisus*, Timiș < *Tibiscus*, *Tibisia*, *Timisis*, Bârzava < *Bersovia*, *Bersobia*, Cerna < *Dierna*, *Tierna*, *Zerna*, Motru < *Amutria*, *Admutrium*, Jiu < *Silus*, Gilort < *Gilpil*, Olt < *Aluta*, *Alutus*, Lotru < *Latron*, *Latris*, Vedea < *Ude*, Argeș < *Ordessos*, Buzău < *Muzeos*, *Buseos*, Siret < *Hierasus*, *Tiarantos*, *Seretos* and Prut < *Pyretus*, *Porota*. Some of them are recorded by Herodotus (Book IV, Chap. 49). On the other hand, the name of small watercourses has been changed, e.g. *Sargetia* to *Valea Grădiștei* or *Valea Orăștiei*.

The names of ancient localities have mostly disappeared and what recall them are stone inscriptions and Roman and Greek writings. Illustrative in this respect is *Sarmizegetusa*, the capital of the Dacian State, and a lot of *davae* (strongholds): *Argedava* (Popești), *Acidava* (Piatra Olt), *Arcidava* (Vărădia), *Berzobis* > *Berzovia*, *Buridava* (Ocelele Mari), *Cumidava* (Râșnov), *Docidava* (Șimleu Silvaniei), *Pelendava* (Craiova), *Petrodava* (Piatra Neamț), *Piroboridava* (Poiana), *Ramidava* (Drajna de Sus), *Rusidava* (Vulturești/Olt), *Sucidava* (Corabia), *Sacidava* (Miercurea Sibiului), *Tamasidava* (Răcătău de Jos), *Zargidava* (Brad-Roman), etc. Note the compound form like in German: *Hermannstadt*, *Kronstadt*, *Schäßburg*, *Karlsburg*, that is just the other-way-round than in Romanian in which word-order has been taken over from the Romans, e.g. *Civitavecchia* in Italian (Cetatea Veche in Romanian).

Only oikonyms have been preserved in a slightly altered form: Abrud < *Abrutus* and Albac < *Albakidioi* (Vraciu 1980). The great majority have been substituted for more recent toponyms of various origins related to historical conditions: *Admutrium* (*Amutria*) > Butoiești (Rom.), *Aizisis* > Fârliug (Rom.), *Ampelum* > Zlatna (Slavic), *Apulum* > Alba Iulia (Latin), *Brucla* > Aiud (Hung.), *Dinogetia* > *Garvăn*, *Malva* > *Reșca* (Slavic), *Potaisa* > *Turda* (Rom.), *Napoca* > Cluj (Rom.),

*Porolissum* > Moigrad (Slavic), *Germisara* > Geoagiu (Hung.), *Dierna* > Orșova (Slavic), *Drobeta* > Turnu Severin (Rom. + Slavic), *Tibiscum* > Jupa (Slavic). An ancient Thracio-Geto-Dacian toponym is also *Dacia*, also the very name of that country (*România. Atlas istorico-geografic, 1996*).

**1.2.2. Latin toponyms.** The Romans are known to have conquered Dacia, generally in A.D. 106, ruling it until A.D. 271, that is for about 165 years, preserving the Dacian toponymy. Just like in other parts of the Roman Empire, they did name some castra and settlements in which Latin is easily recognizable. After the invasion of migratory peoples, who usually ruled “sword-in-hand” (*Istoria Românilor, 2001, III, p. 603*), these names were lost and replaced with more recent ones: *Ad Aquae [Calidae]* (Thermal Waters) > Călan (the same toponym, a bit modified – *Aachen*, currently exists in Germany, because migratory populations had not passed through that area); *Ad Mediam* > Mehadia, *Ad Pannonios* > Teregoava, *Agnaviae* > Zăvoi, *Alburnus Maior* > Roșia Montană, *Angustia* > Brețcu, *Arutela* > Păușa (Călimănești), *Caput Bubali* > Cornățel, *Caput Stenarum* > Boița, *Castra Traiana* > Sâmbotin, *Cedonia* > Gușterița/Sibiu, *Centum Putae* > Surducu Mare, *Certiae* > Romita, *Civitas Ausdecensium* > Cetatea, *Gaganae* > Armeniș, *Gratiana* > Dunavățu de Sus, *Largiana* > Românași, *Mascliana* > Slatina-Timiș, *Micia* > Vețel, *Optatiana* > Sutoru, *Petra* > Camena, *Pons Aluti* > Ionești-Govora, *Pons Vetus* > Căineni / Olt, *Praetorium* > Copăceni, *Resculum* > Bologa, *Romula* > Reșca, *Saline* > Războieni-Cetate, *Salsovia* > Mahmudia, *Thalamonium* > Murighiol, *Troesmis* > Turcoaia, *Tropaeum Traiani* > Adamclisi, *Turris* > Turnu Măgurele, *Ulmetum* > Pantelimon, *Vicus Celeris* > Săcele, *Clementianum* > Mihail Kogălniceanu, etc.

An exception make *Ad Aquae Hercules* (Băile Herculane), *Ad Mediam* (Mehadia), *Altinum [Altina]* (Oltina), *Berzobis* (Berzovia), *Turris* (Turnu Măgurele), as well as *Castra Nuova* (Castranova officially assigned) and *Colonia Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa*, the Roman capital of Dacia; *Sarmizegetusa*, of Dacian origin, continues to exist in books, having been given by the Romanian authorities after the Unification of Romania with Transylvania in 1918.

It is again the Romans who named the three provinces: *Dacia Superior (Porolissensis and Apulensis)*, *Dacia Inferior (Malvensis)*, as well as *Ad Moesiam* (today Muntenia), preserved in books and in historical atlases.

**1.2.3. Greek and Byzantine toponyms.** The Greeks, renowned navigators and traders, founded several cities and colonies on the shores of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, which initially had Greek names, some currently existing in Italy, e.g. *Neapole < Neapolis* in Greek (The New City) and in Romania: *Histria*. The Greeks settled on the Black Sea coast in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cc B.C., setting up the cities of *Tomis* (Constanța), *Callatis* (Mangalia), *Parthenopolis* (Jurilovea), *Histria* and *Argamum* (Sarichioi).

Later on, in the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> cc A.D. they founded *Halmyris* (Dunavățu de Jos), *Salsovia* (Mahmudia) and *Aegyssus* (Tulcea) in the Danube Delta and farther on, inside Dobrogea, *Axiopolis* (Cernavodă) and *Ibida* (Slava Rusă). Up to the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. all these city-strongholds were prosperous trading centres, their flourishing life being completely destroyed by the migratory populations, first the Visigoths, then the Slavs and finally the Bulgars (in 680). The names of these cities were all lost, but for one: *Histria*, introduced by the Romanian administration in 1928 on the proposal and insistence of the geographer Constantin Brătescu, impressed by the ruins discovered there, and who assigned Romanian names to other Dobrogean localities as well.

The same Greek origin have the hydronyms *Istros* (the Lower Danube), replaced by the Thracian term *Donaris – Dunaris* and *Pontus Euxinus*, signifying “Benevolent Sea”, the idea being to mislead sea-ferers, as to violent storms and huge waves customary of the Black Sea (*Dicționar de istorie veche a României 1976*).

**1.2.4. Slavic toponyms.** Beginning with the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D., waves of barbarian peoples began penetrating the Romanian soil, their pressure making the Roman army and administration leave Dacia (271). The first migrators were of German origin (the Visigoths and Gepides), followed in the 4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup>

cc by Huns, Avars and Slavs, who like in other parts of Europe would plunder and destroy the network of cities, largely disorganising social and economic life. The native population had to leave the towns and retreat into the villages lying in smaller valleys wherefrom people would take temporary shelter in the forests, on the plateaus and smooth summits of the neighbouring mountains. After the danger passed they would return to their households.

As a result, most ancient toponyms, especially names of settlements, were lost for good, life-saving becoming the population's major preoccupation. However, the name of big rivers, along which people used to travel and return to their settlements on the large, smooth and fertile terraces protected from flooding, but with the groundwater at level low depth, were preserved as points of orientation (see 1.2.1.).

Of all the migratory populations, it was the Slavs who arrived beginning with A.D. 580. They were more numerous and settled down in the larger valleys, cultivating the land. Their co-habitation with the Romanized Romanian autochthons has resulted in some words of Slavic origin being introduced into the Romanian word-stock and in Romanian toponymy. Studies have revealed that cca. 8% of the Romanian words are of old Slavic origin (Macrea 1961), similarly numerous toponyms, given that the Slavs had formed the ruling elite rather a long period of time (6<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> cc A.D.), see such words as *stăpân* (master), *jupân* (boyar, master), *cneaz* (knez), *voievod* (voievode, ruling prince), *boier* (boyar, nobleman), *vornic* (village chief, magistrate), etc.

The majority of Slavic place-names are recognisable by their suffixes, prefixes and word root. Some can be identified in the translation made by language specialists who used the historical comparative method, others represent typical toponyms (appellatives and anthroponyms).

Major old Slavic suffixes:

- ava: *Bârzava, Coșava, Dumbrava, Jidava, Lișteava, Oreava, Racova, Suceava, and Târnava*;
- ota: *Albota, Arnota, Balota, Dobrota, Gorgota, Palota, Pâncota, Probota, and Șerbota*;
- ov: *Bascov, Brașov, Bucov, Cleanov, Cricov, Drașov, Ilfov, Lișcov, Nanov, Milcov, and Snagov*;
- ova: *Brezova, Bucova, Cacova, Ciacova, Craiova, Criciova, Cucova, Darnova, Dâmbova, Dragova, Drinova, Dubova, and Tutova*;
- ovu: *Bratcovu, Bratlovu, Hrușovu, Ilovu, Milcovu, Neajlovu, Ostrovu, and Vicovu*;
- ca: *Camenca, Botorca, Beica, Cojocna, Mijarca, and Mlarișca*;
- eva: *Cornereva, and Costileva*;
- eț: *Begleț, Bistreț, Crușeț, Dalboșeț, Dieneț, Hârboveț, Pogleț, Topleț, Soloneț, and Voroneț*;
- ița: *Bistrița, Camenița, Ciulnița, Clănița, Coșevița, Dobrița, Bolvașnița, Plenița, Ialomița, Dâmbovița, Delnița, and Sornița* ;
- iva: *Clopotiva, Craiva, and Sălciva*;
- inț: *Băiniț, Beliniț, Beloșniț, Bogodiniț, Chesiniț, Covășiniț, Crinț, Lalosiniț, and Nicoliniț*;
- ința: *Berzița, Ghelnița, Florința, Lechința, Leorința, and Mehedința*;
- ic: *Brestelnic, Brâznic, Călnic, Căvnic, Chijic, Comarnic, Dobric, Dalnic, and Drănic*;
- in: *Bucin, Bustuchin, Cașin, Cuvin, Derin, Dobrin, Păulin, Săvârșin, and Seitin*;
- iște: *Braniște, Cănepiște, Grădiște, Săliște, and Târgoviște*;
- ăț: *Brestovăț, Bucovăț, Coșovăț, Casovăț, Cralovăț, Crușovăț, Dobrovăț, Dranovăț, Dunavăț, Gostăvăț, Holovăț, and Topolovăț*;
- ea: *Betea, Buftea, Cetea, Corpadea, Corugea, Coșlugea, Coșnea, Cungrea, Decea, Dobrogostea, Dolea, and Dracea, Drincea*;
- ia: *Bratia, Bozia, Brezoia, Crevedia, Crivadia, Dobraia, Fetindia, Gâlmeia, and Secăria*;
- ina: *Broaina, Câmpina, Cioclovina, Crivina, Dragalina, Studina, Stupina, and Sulina* ;
- ta: *Bălata, Corlata, Glâmbocata, Iarmata, Păltinata, and Vișforâta*;
- oi: *Baboi, Brezoi, Băicoi, Coroi, Ciuhoi, Lămoșoi, Totoi, Orloi, and Pitoi*;
- oaia: *Bercioaia, Brezoaia, Dăroaia, Gotcaia, Hălmoșoaia, Pârjoaia, and Priboiaia*;
- na: *Bazna, Blandiana, Cerna, Derna, Desna, Dorna, Coșna, Covasna, Crasna, Dragomirna, Drajna, Putna, and Zlatna*;

- mir: *Balomir, Dezmir, Dobromir, and Dragomir*;
- mira: *Dobromira, and Vladimira*;
- miru: *Balomiru, Costomiru, Cușmiru, Stanomiru, and Tehomiru*;
- uți: *Broscăuți, Brășăuți, Cojăuți, Păpăuți, Răcăuți, Rădăuți, Tăuți, and Vășcăuți*;

Major Slavic prefixes:

- **pre**: *Predeal, Prejba, Prejmer, Preluca, Prelipca, Prelușei, and Presaca*;
- **pri**: *Pricaz, Prigoria, Prihodiște, Prisăcani, Prislop, Priboi, Priporu, and Prival*;
- **ză**: *Zăbala, Zăbrani, Zăgriș, Zărnești, Zăpodia, Zănoaga, Zăvoi, and Zărnești*;
- **po**: *Podriga, Pocala, Pociovaliștea, Poclusa, Pojorâta, Posada, Poplaca, Pobleș, and Poșaga*.

Natural and anthropic elements: *Sibiu* „Râul cu Corni” (River with Cornel tree); *Scorei* “Râul Repede” (Fast River); *Cernavodă* “Apa Neagră” (Black Water); *Buda* “Coliba, Căscioara” (Hut, Small House); *Satchinez* “Sat de cnezi” (Knez Village); *Starchiojd* “Chiojdul Bătrân, Vechi” (Old Chiojd) (Iordan 1963).

Anthroponyms: *Berivoi, Bogdan Vodă, Bogdana, Bogza, Bran, Dobra, Vladimiri, etc.*

### 1.3. ROMANIAN TOPONYMS

At the end of 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Slavs coalesced with the Romanized autochthonous majority population, so that around the year 1000 the process of the Romanian people’s ethnogenesis was concluded. At the same time, also the Romanian language was completed, maintaining an exclusively Latin grammar structure, but with numerous Slavic elements, incorporated into the dominantly Latin vocabulary beside the 161 words inherited from the Daco-Gaetae.

From these lexical elements the Romanian people has created a multitude of toponyms which, irrespective of linguistic origin, are the most numerous ones. What is characteristic of the Romanian toponyms is their being understood by all the speakers of Romanian. An exception make a few archaic terms, no longer in current use, which had been living words in the past and understood by everyone at that time.

Most of these toponyms, originally appellatives, are found in the Romanian language dictionaries, the latest and most accessible being *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române (DEX)*, and the most comprehensive one *Dicționarul limbii române (DLR)*, 37 volumes, last issued by the Publishing House of the Romanian Academy. Other Romanian toponyms originated from names of persons – *Dicționarul onomastic românesc* by N.A. Constantinescu, Ed. Academiei, 1963 and *Dicționar al numelor de familie românești* by I. Iordan, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983.

Only after having looked for a toponym in these dictionaries without finding it, we may say that it is foreign, not Romanian, but although it is still necessary to consult the works of language specialists in toponomastics.

In terms of the populations who lived and / for are still living in Romania, Romanian toponyms may originate from the following word-stocks: Thracian-Gaeto-Dacian, Latin, Slavic, Turkish, Hungarian, German, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croatian, etc.

**1.3.1. Toponyms from the Thracio-Geto-Dacian word-stock** included in the **DEX** are abbreviated *cf. alb.* = compare with Albanian, because the historical-comparative method has proven them to be autochthonous, not found in the languages existing in the surrounding areas. Historian I. I. Russu has published several works devoted to these elements. His latest book deals with *The Ethnogenesis of the Romanians. The autochthonous Thracio-Dacian Fund and the Latin-Romanic component* (in Rom. 1981). From the list of toponyms, the following are given below: *Argeaua, Argele*, “big whole for preserving the beehive over the winter”; *Baciu, Băcia, Băceni, Băcești*, “baci, master over other shepherds”; *Balaura, Balaurul, Bălăurel, Băligoși, Balta, Balta Albă, Balta Doamnei, Balta Neagră, Balta Raței, Balta Sărată, Balta Verde, Bălteni, Bălțeanu, Bălțești, Barza, Gura Barza, Barzul, Bordei,*

Bordeele, Bordei Verde, *Brad*, Brazi, Brădet, Brădești, Brădeanu, *Brândușa*, Poiana Brândușița, *Brânzeni*, Brânzari, *Brustur*, *Brusturi*, *Brusturet*, *Bucura*, Bucureni, Bucureasa, Bucuresci, București, Bucuru, *Bunget*, Bungetu, *La Buturugă*, *Bulz*, Bulza, Bulzani, Bulzești, Bulzi, Bulzu, *Butucari*, Butucăria, Buturugari, Buturugeni, *Buza*, Buza Nedeei, Buzata, Buzeni, Buzescu, *Căciulați*, *Cătunu*, Cătuna, Cătunele, *Cârlani*, Cărlănești, Cărlăneț, *Copaci*, Copaciu, Copăceni, Curmătura Ștezii, *Curpen*, Curpeni, Curpenelu, Valea Curpenișului, Vârful Curpinesei, *Cursaru*, Cursari, Cursești, *Custura*, *Dărâmași*, *Gardu*, Pârâul Gardului, Gârdești, *Gălbează*, Gălbezeni, *Ghimpoaia*, Ghimpați, Ghimpețeni, *Ghionoiaia*, Ghionoiaica, *Goruni*, Goroana, Goronet, Goruniș, *Groapa*, Groapele, Gropile, Gropeni, *Grumăzești*, Grumăzoaia, *Grunji*, Stanca Grunjii, Grunjel, *Gușați*, Gușoieni, Gușoiu, Gușoianca, *Lespedea*, Lespezile, Lespezelu, Lespezeni, *Malu*, Malurile, Mălușel, Mălușteni, *Marele*, Muntele Mare, Mărișel, Mărăști, *Măzăreni*, Calea Măzărâchii, Măzăraru, *Măceșul*, Măceșurile, Măcișeni, *Măgura*, Măguri, Măgurele, Măgulicea, *Mânzați*, Mânzălești, Mânzătești, *Moșia*, Moșoiaia, Moșești, Moșneni, *Munună*, *Murg*, Murgești, *Pârâu*, Pârâu, Pâraiele, Pârâiești, *Rânzești*, Rânzălești, *Sâmburești*, *Spânzul*, *Stâna*, Stâna de Vale, Stânișoara, *Stânca*, Stâncești, *Strugureni*, *Strunga*, Strungari, Strungile, *Șopârteni*, Șopârlești, Șopârlița, *Țapu*, Poiana Țapulului, *Țarcu*, Țărculești, *Urda*, Urdele, Urdari, Urdești, Urdeasca, *Vatra Dornei*, Vatra Moldoviței, *Viezuri*, Vieușina, Vieușianu, etc.

**1.3.2. Toponyms from the Latin word-stock** represent the largest and most important category since words inherited from Latin are outright dominant, representing over 20% of the current Romanian vocabulary. However, the words most commonly used in contemporary Romanian (38%) originate from French, e.g. fountain pen, note-book, pencil, train, railway station, ticket, highway, car, etc., because the respective objects did not exist in Roman Times, so they had to be borrowed from somewhere (Macrea 1961). These have not produced toponyms proper, except for some bookish regionyms, e.g. Getic *Piedmont*, *Metaliferi Mountains*, Black Sea *Continental Shelf*, Black Sea *coast*, Danube *Delta*, Făgăraș *Depression*, etc.

All appellatives from the Latin word-stock are found in **DEX** with the abbreviation– *Lat.* we have previously mentioned that a few appellatives from all word-stocks, being very old have lost their meaning in current speech, being replaced by other words. Having become archaisms, their meaning is explained only in the Romanian language dictionaries (**DEX**, **DLR**). Even nowadays one witnesses the substitution of old words of Thracio-Geto-Dacian origin for new words of Slavic origin: *grumaz* – *gât* (throat). Toponyms in this category are: *Chicui*, *Picui*, *Păcui* lui Soare etc. < *Lat. piculeus* “mountain peak or hilltop” and *runcu* < *Lat. runcus* “deforested place with pasture, fallow land”, present in various forms in some 50 toponyms throughout the country: *Runc*, *Runcu*, *Runcuri*, *Runculeț*, *Runculeu*, *Runcul Rău*, *Runcul Oilor*, *Coasta Runcului*, *Fața Runcului*, *Gura Runcului*, *Valea Runcului*, *Vârful Runcului*, *Runculețul de Jos*, etc.

– **Oronyms**: *Albele*, Dealul *Albii*, *D\**. *Armăsarului*, *Bătrâna*, *Gâtul Berbecului*, *Capra*, *D. Carpeni*, *D. Cărpinei*, *Cărbunari*, *Căpățâna*, *Munții Căpățâniei*, *D. Cetatea*, *Vârful Cetății*, *Cheile Albacului*, *Cheile Runcului*, *Cheile Turzii*, *Vf\*\**. *Cireșului*, *M\*\*\**. *Codru-Moma*, *Culmea Codrului*, *Creasta Pietri*, *Vf. Crucii*, *Curăturile*, *Curăta Mare*, *Curățele*, *Cucurbăta Mare*, *Cucurbăta Mică*, *Dosul Orlatului*, *Fața Mioarelor*, *Fața Mare*, *Fața Mică*, *D. Frasinului*, *Vf. Făget*, *Vf. Frumoasa*, *D. Furcii*, *D. Furcilor*, *Găina*, *Găureasa*, *Galbena*, *Gruiu*, *Gruiete*, *Gruieț*, *Grușteța*, *Gruianca*, *Gruieni*, *Muntele*, *Muntele Mare*, *Muntele Mic*, *Muntele Negru*, *Muntele de Sus*, *Capu Muntelui*, *Între Munți*, *Muncel*, *Muncelul Mare*, *Muncelul Rotund*, *Piatra Munceilor*, *Munțișorul*, *Neteda*, *Netedul*, *Paltina*, *Paltinul*, *Vf. Paltinei*, *Vf. Păltiniș*, *M. Pădurea Craiului*, *D. Pădurii*, *M. Păpușa*, *Piatra*, *La Piatră*, *După Piatră*, *Sub Piatră*, *Piatra Bulbucului*, *Piatra Cântătoare*, *Piatra Craiului*, *Piatra Neagră*, *Piatra Albă*, *Piatra Galbenă*, *Piatra Tăiată*, *Pietrosul*, *Pietriceana*, *Pietrișu*, *Vf. Plaiul*, *Plăișoru*, *Porumbelul*, *Râpa Roșie*, *Râpele*,

\* D = deal (Eng. hill).

\*\* Vf. = vârful (Eng. peak).

\*\*\* M = munte (Eng. mountain).

*Rotunda, Rotundul, Sapa, Scara, Scărița, Scărișoara, D. Secătura, Vf. Secăturii, Sterpu D. Șesului, Șesul Craiului, Șesul Lupșelului, Vf. Strâmba Mare, Tomnaticul, Tomnățicel, Văratec, Vf. Văcarului, M. Văcăria Mare, Vf. Ursu, etc.*

– **Hydronyms:** *Adâncă, Adâncata, Albele, Amara, Apa Caldă, Apa Lină, Apa Mare, Apa Neagră, Pârâul Auriu, Baia, Baia de Piatră, Băișoara, Băița, Boul Mare, Boul Mic, Bouleț, Boura, Căldăraru, Călușeri, Capra, Căpreasa, Căprioara, Cărbunari, Cărbunăriei, Cărbunele Negru, Casele, Cățelu, Ceptura, Cheia, Cheița, După Fântână, Fața, Fântânelele, Fântâna, Fântânele, Frumoasa, Frumușeana, Fundata, Fundături, Furcșoara, Galbena, Lacul Sărat, Pietrele, Râu, Râușor, Râura, Râul Alb, Râul Bărbat, Râul Mare, Râul Mic, Râu de Mori, Râul Morii, Râul Satului, Râul Spinului, Spinoasa, Strâmbătura, Valea Albă, Valea Adâncă, Valea Astupăturii, Valea Boului, Valea Caldă, Valea Calului, Valea Caprelor, Valea Aurie, Valea Largă, Valea Lungă, Valea Mare, Valea Mică, Valea Morii, Valea Scurtă, Valea Seacă, Valea Vadului, Vadu, Vadurile, Verdea, etc.*

– **Oikonyms from the Latin word-stock** in alphabetical order (only letters A and B abbreviated are mentioned): *Adâncă, Adâncata* (3 localities), *Adunați* (4), *Afânata, Afumați* (3), *Alba* (3), *Albele, Albeni, Albi, Albina* (3), *Albinari Albiș* (2), *Albița, Aleși, Alun* (2), *Aluniș* (10), *Alunu, Alungeni, Amara* (3), *Amaru, Anina, Anini, Aninișu* (2), *Aninoasa* (6), *Apa* (2), *Apa Neagră, Apa Sărată, Apele Vii*), *Arama* (2), *Arbora, Arbore, Arborea, Argintari, Ariciu, Aricioaia, Arin, Arini* (2), *Ariniș, Arsa, Arsele, Arsură, Arsuri* (2), *Arșița* (4), *Arțari* (2), *Arțaru, Aspra* (It. Aspromonte), *Avântu* (It. Avanti), *Baia* (10): B\* de Aramă, B. de Arieș, B. de Criș, B. de Fier, B. Mare, B. Nouă, B. Sprie), *Băile* (1 + 16 assoc. with determiners: B. Borșa, B. Herculane, B. Tușnad, etc.), *Băișoara, Băița* (7), *Barboși, Bărboasa, Bărbosu, Bătrâna, Bătrâni, Bătrânu, Sat Bătrân, Bălțata* (2), *Bălțați* (3), *Bou, Boura, Boureni* (3), *Broscățani, Broșteanca, Broșteni* (20), *Buciu, Buciniș* (2), *Bucium* (5), *Buciumeni* (5), *Buciumi* (3), *Butea, Buteasa, etc.* (*Dicționarul geografic al României, I*, 2008).

**1.3.2. Toponyms from the Slavic word-stock.** Beside Slavic toponyms proper, which the Romanians do not understand, there are a number of toponyms formed of appellatives and other words (adjectives, adverbs, etc.) belonging to the Romanian word-stock of Slavic origin. They are mentioned in **DEX** with the indicative *-sl.* and represent about 8% of the Romanian vernacular (Macrea 1961).

– **Oronyms:** *Baba, Babele, Chicera* (*Chicera* Amnașului), *Cioaca, Cracu, Dealul ...* (assoc. with numerous determiners: *Dealul Mare, D. Pleșii, etc.*), *Lunca Cîbinului, Vârful Răchita, Podișul Târnavelor, Dealul Podele, Pe Podele, and Padiș.*

– **Hydronyms:** *Baba, Pârâul Babii, Bălan, Bălana, Belciugu, Bobu, Bogata, Bozu, Dumbrava, Dumbrăvița, Iezerul Mare, Iezerul Mic, Izbuș, Izvor, Izvoarele, Izvorul ...* (assoc. with numerous determiners: over 30 hydronyms throughout the country), *Ponor, Ponoară, Poiana, Valea Poienii, Poienița, Pustia, Pustiul, Răchita, Răchișeua, Racu, Pârâul Racilor, etc.*

– **Oikonyms:** *Baba, Băbuța, Băjenari, Bălaia* (3 localities), *Bălan* (2), *Bălani* (2.), *Bălanu* (2), *Bălușă, Belciug* (2), *Belciugatele* (2), *Bivolari* (2.), *Blidari* (7), *Bobu* (2.), *Bogata* (8), *Bogați, Boz* (2), *Bozieni* (4), *Bozieș* (2.), *Breb, Brebu* (8), *Bujor* (3), *Bujoru* (3), *Bujoreni* (3), *Deal, Dealu* (4), *Dealul* (and assoc. with other determiners, e.g. *Dealul Aluniș, Dealul Mare, etc.* = 8), *Dumbrava* (28), *Dumbrava ...* (assoc. with determiners: *Dumbrava Roșie* etc. = 10), *Dumbrăveni* (10), *Dumbrăvești* (3), *Dumbrăvița* (12), *Dumbrăvița ...* (assoc. with determiners *Dumbrăvița* de Codru, etc. = 6 ... *Livada* (7), *Livada* (assoc. with determiners: *Livada* Beiușului, etc. = 8), *Livadia* and *Livadea* (7), *Livezi* (6), *Livezile* (7), *Lunca* (32), *Lunca ...* (assoc. with determiners: *Lunca Ampoitei, etc.* = 45), *Luncani* (4), *Luncani* (assoc. with determiners: *Lunca* de Jos, etc. = 2.), *Luncile* (2), *Luncșoara* (7), *Podari* (2), *Podeni* (10), *Podgoria* (2 *Podoleni* (4), and *Podu* (assoc. with determiners: *Podul Broșteni, etc.* = 32), *Poenari* (2), *Poiana* (35), and *Poiana* (assoc. with determiners: *Poiana Aiudului, Poiana Sibiului, etc.* = 58, *Poienari* (14), *Poienile* (9), and *Poienița* (10) etc. (*Dicționarul geografic al României, I*, 2008, **II**, 2009).

\* B = baia (Eng. Baths, spa).

**1.3.3. Toponyms from the Bulgarian word-stock.** In A.D. 680, the Bulgars, a migratory people of Turkic origin, came from the River Volga (hence the name of Volgars later turned into Bulgars), crossed the Danube and settled in the south of the Danube. Here they founded a feudal state, assumed the language of the Slavic population living there, and ruling for some time also some Romanian provinces. This co-habitation introduced some works into Romanian, which subsequently became toponyms: *Bolovanu*, *Bolovani*, *Bolovăniș*, *Busuiocu*, *Colibași*, *Grădinari*, *Pogoanele*, *Plosca*, *Varnița*, *Zlătari*, etc.

**1.3.4. Toponyms from the Serbo-Croatian word-stock.** Other branches of the southern Slavs, the Serbians and the Croatians, crossed Romania (6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> cc) and settled in the north-western part of the Balkan Peninsula. From the contact with the Romanian population, a few words, e.g. *Târlele*, *Târlești*, *D. Târlui*, etc., were acquired, becoming toponyms later on.

**1.3.5. Toponyms from the Ukrainian word-stock.** Ukrainians are part of the Eastern Slavs. They settled at Romania's north-eastern border. Their language lies at the origin of several words, currently toponyms: *Bahna* (6), *Bahnele*, *Băhneni*, *Hreabăn*, *Hrebeni*, *Hulub*, *Huluba*, etc.

**1.3.6. Toponyms from the Petcheneg-Cumanian word-stock.** In the 10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries, two Turkic peoples, coming also from the Asian steppes, crossed Romania and partly settled there. They were the Petchenegs and the Cumans whose main occupation was shepherding. They left us a few words that turned toponyms: *Ciobanu*, *Ciobănița*, *Ciobănoaia*, *Ciobănuș*, *Cibanu* and *Odaia* (2 localities), *Odaia* ... (assoc. with determiners: *Odaia Banului*, etc. 8), *Odăieni*, *Odăile* (7) (Giurescu 1961).

**1.3.7. Toponyms from the Tartar word-stock.** The big Tartar invasion, a very numerous Mongolian people, took place in 1241. After having been defeated in battles by the East-European peoples, they settled down in the steppes from the north and west of the Black Sea: Crimea, Bessarabia, Dobrogea, Bulgaria, etc. Romanian took over a few words, the toponyms *Arcan*, *Arcani*, etc.

**1.3.8. Toponyms from the Osmanli Turkish word-stock.** With a well-organised army, the Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453, extending their domination into the Balkan Peninsula. Despite the heroic deeds of Voivodes Mircea the Old, Vlad the Impaler and Stephen the Great, Wallachia and Moldavia had to accept Ottoman suzerainty, which lasted from the 15<sup>th</sup> century until the War of Independence in 1877–1878. As a result, the two Romanian Principalities, and after 1526 (the Battle of Mohács) Transylvania, too, had to pay tribute and suffer the influence of the many Turkish functionaries and military men sent here to make order. That would explain the presence of words of Osmanli Turkish origin in Romanian, some of them becoming place-names, e.g. *Bursuc*, *Bursucani*, *Bursuceni*, *Bursuci*, etc.

**1.3.9. Toponyms from the Hungarian word-stock.** In 896, the Hungarians, a Finno-Ugric people, arrived from the steppes lying north of the Caspian Sea and west of the Ural Mountains, settling in the Pannonian Plain. In the year 1000, they were Christianised under their King St Stephen whom the Pope gifted with a golden crown, as sign of power and support. In order to increase his influence in Eastern Europe, the Pope would send numerous missionaries and notaries to the Hungarian Court. They would relate about the Hungarians' deeds and history while the great many documents written in Latin would contribute to the cultural and political development of the Hungarian kingdom. By the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, after having emerged victorious in the battles waged against the native voivodes Gelu, Menumorut and Glad, the Hungarian kings succeeded in conquering Transylvania (inclusive of Banat, Crișana and Maramureș) and become exerting absolute rule until the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, 1918. Their over 800-year domination of this territory, a period in which the official language was Hungarian, while the autochthonous Romanian population was considered kind of tolerated, numerous Magyar words entered Romanian, becoming toponyms alongside the place-names



given by the Hungarian population and the authorities, e.g. *Acățari*, *Agriș* (8 localities), *Bocșa* (3), *Bocșitura*, *Berc*, *Hotarele*, *Meșteru*, *Ogașu*, *Orașu Nou*, *Sălașu*, *Șoimu*, *Șoimuș*, *Uricani*, *Vama Seacă*, *Vama Veche*, etc.

**1.3.10. Toponyms from the German word-stock.** To defend the southern and eastern borders of the kingdom and help with the economic development of Transylvania, the Hungarian kings brought in German colonists (mid-12th century), whom they named Saxons after Sachsen (Saxony), a land closer geographically, where they originated from. The Saxons founded numerous settlements, outstanding among them being the seven city strongholds (hence the German name of the province “Siebenbürgen”: *Hermannstadt* (Sibiu), *Kronstadt* (Brașov), *Schäßburg* (Sighișoara), *Mühlbach* (Sebeș), *Mediasch* (Mediaș), *Klausenburg* (Cluj) and *Bistritz* (Bistrița). Later on (1717–1718), Empress Maria Tereza would colonise other Germans, this time from Schwabenland (Swabia), the so-called Swabians, placing them in Banat and in the southern part of Crișana. In time, other German groups would be settled in Maramureș (the Tziptzers), in Bukovina and around the town of Satu Mare. Living side by side with the Romanians led to a series of German words (some of them growing into toponyms, others remaining regionalisms) being borrowed by the autochthons: *Glăjăria* (< glajă < *Glas* < glass), *Halta Unirea* (haltă < Halte < Halting Place), *Șura Mare*, *Șura Mică* (șură < Schur < Small Shed), *Țigla Mare*, *Țigla Mică* (țiglă < Ziegel < tile), etc.

**1.3.11. Toponyms from the neo-Greek word-stock.** After Ruling Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was killed in Constantinople, accused of breach of faith to the High Porte, the Romanian Principalities would be ruled for 100 years (1716–1821) by Greeks from Phanar, a district in Constantinople, hence they were named Phanariotes. They would arrive accompanied by numerous Greek servants and functionaries to help them complete the mission they had been assigned to, namely, to collect taxes. During the Phanariote rule, schools in Greek were set up, and several Greek words, some of them turned toponyms, entered Romanian: *Arac*, *Araci*, *Boboc*, *Boboci* (2 localities), *Brotac*, *Drum*, *Mărgea*, *Mic*, *Spân*, etc.

**1.3.12. Toponyms originating from anthroponyms** are quite frequent, being traced to the name of a settlement founder, of some former owners, or village communities, who had possessed a mountain, a pasture, an agricultural terrain, etc. Depending on the initial (basic) name these toponyms have different origins: a) Romanian: *Albești*, *București*, *Moldoveanu*, *Negoiu*, *Cindrel*, and *Șureanu*; b) Slavic: *Dragomirești*, *Vlădești*, and *Vălcănești*; c) Hungarian: *Fărcășești*, *Fizești*, and *Mogoșești*; d) Petcheneg-Cumanian: *Tâncăbești*, *Tocsobeni*, *Turtabă*, *Basarabasa*, and *Basarabi*; e) Turkish: *Cioflinceni*, *Hagieni*, and *Caraiman*.

**1.3.13. Ethnotoponyms originating from names of peoples:**

a) Romanian: *Bulgaru*, *Bulgari*, *Comana*, *Comănești*, *Greaca*, *Greci*, *Huțani*, *Lipovanul*, *Neamțul*, *Piatra Neamț*, *Târgu Neamț*, *Bencecul German*, *Stamora Germană*, *Peceneaga*, *Pecinegul*, *Pecinișca*, *Rusu*, *Ruși*, *Rușii-Munți* (County Mureș), *Săsciori*, *Dealul Sasului*, *Valea Sasului*, *Secuia*, *Târgu Secuiesc*, *Sârba*, *Sârbi*, *Sârbeni*, *Tătarca*, *Cheile Tătarului*, *Tătârlăua*, *Turceni*, *Turcoania*, *Podul Turcului*, *Ungurașul*, *Ungurei*, etc.;

b) Hungarian: *Beșeneu*, *Beșenova*, *Beșimbac* (currently Olteț, Viștea Commune), *Beșinău* (currently Secășel, Ohaba Commune), *Beșineu* (Sânpaul Commune, County Mureș) < Hung. *Bessenyő* = Pecenegul; *Mintia*, *Mintiul Gherlei* < Hung. *Nemeti* = Germans, Nemți; *Crainimăt* < Hung., *Király-Nemeti* = Germans subjected directly to the kings not to the local feudal lords.

**1.3.14. Hagyonyms or toponyms of religious origin.** They recall the name of a saint, of a mystic revelation, or of a place considered to be sacred:

a) Romanian: *Sfântu Gheorghe* (8 localities), *Sfântu Ilie*, *Sfântu Vasile*, *Sfânta Elena*, *Sfânta Ana*, *Sângeorz* (2), *Sânnicolau* (4), *Sâniacob* (3), *Sâniob* (1), *Sânmihaiu* (6), *Sânnicoară* (2), *Sânpetru* (2), *Sânpetru* (assoc. with determiners = 6), *Sântămăria* (4), *Sântioana* (3), and *Sântion*;

b) Hungarian: *Sânbenedic*, *Sâncrai* (10 localities), *Sândominic*, *Sânmartin* (6), *Sânărăghita* (2), *Sânmiclăuș* (3), *Sânpaul* (4), *Sânsimion* (2), *Sântana* (3), *Sântimbru* < Hung. Szent Imre “Emerik” (3).

**1.3.15. Toponyms recently assigned by the administration.** Several settlements have officially been given new names to bestow a mark of honour on some historical, scientific and cultural personalities: *Nicolae Bălcescu*, *Tudor Vladimirescu*, *Mihai Viteazul*, *Avram Iancu*, *Cuza Vodă*, *C. A. Rosetti*, *Axente Sever*, *Mihail Kogălniceanu*, *Aurel Vlaicu*, *Traian Vuia*, *George Coșbuc*, *George Enescu*, *Ciprian Porumbescu*, *Constantin Daicovicu*, etc.

However, some less politicised names, e.g. *Oțelu Roșu* in Caraș-Severin County and Victoria Town in Brașov County, have been preserved.

#### 1.4. NEW SLAVIC TOPONYMS

**1.4.1. Toponyms of Bulgarian origin.** Apart from the words that had entered the Romanian language, there are a few Bulgarian toponyms not really understood by all Romanian speakers. Part of them originate from the Bulgarian population which had arrived from south of the Danube and settled in this territory during various historical periods. Thus, in older times (8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> cc), some Bulgar groups (later on mingled with the native population) were named *șchei*, hence the toponyms *Șchei* (a district in Brașov City and the *Șchiaua* Mountain in the Șureanu Massif).

At the time of the Turkish occupation (14<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> cc) other groups of Bulgarians crossed the River and settled definitively north of the Danube, in the Romanian Plain, where they could enjoy greater freedom. Here they founded a few villages which bear Slavonian names (from the Bulgarian spoken in the Middle Ages): *Cervenia* “Roșia” (distinct from *Crasna Roșia* = Red in Old Slavic), *Bela*, *Bila* “Alba” (distinct from *Băl* = Alb (White) in Old Slavic) etc.

In honour of the victories won by the Romanian Army in Bulgaria, the War of the Independence (1877–1878), the then Bucharest authorities assigned Bulgarian names to several localities in Romania: *Grivița* (8), *Smârdan* (7), *Plevna* (4), *Rahova* (2) and *Vidin* (1). Noteworthy, an outstanding Bulgarian toponymist, Ivan Duridanov, overlooking the historical event, affirmed that all these localities were Bulgarian, wondering how many Bulgarians live in Romania (Petrovici 1970). Therefore, having a good knowledge of the origin of place-names in Romania is strictly necessary in order to correctly explain the moment and significance of their appearance.

**1.4.2. Toponyms of Serbo-Croatian origin.** In the course of history, particularly during the Turkish occupation of Serbia and Croatia (15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> cc), several groups of Serbians and Croatians settled north of Danube defile and in the Romanian Banat area (region lying on the fringes of the Ottoman and later of the Austro-Hungarian empires), where they enjoyed somehow greater freedom. The settlements founded by these groups of people bear typical Serbian and Croatian names: *Belobreșca*, *Divici*, *Șusca*, *Radimna*, *Pojejena*, *Liborajdea*, *Cușovița*, *Sichevița*, *Liubcova*, *Drencova*, *Svinița*, *Dubova*, *Orșova*, etc. (Suciu 1967).

**1.4.3. Toponyms of Ukrainian and Lippovan-Russian origin.** In the northern part of Moldavia and Transylvania, Romanians have for centuries come into direct contact with the Ukrainians, hence a series of place-names originating from this relationship: *Sălătruc*, *Bălătruc*, *Dârmoxa*, *Leadova*, *Lidvu*, etc. (Idu 2000). At the same time, several Ukrainians (named Haholi) and Russian Orthodox believers (named

Lippovans), persecuted by the Tzarist regime for religious considerations, would emigrate (18<sup>th</sup> cent.) and settle down in the Danube Delta area, on the banks of the Razim and Sinoie lakes, and on the Babadag Plateau. Their settlements were given Ukrainian and Russian names: *Pardina*, *Periprava*, *Sfiștovca*, *Letea*, *Cardon*, *Maliuc*, *Gorgova*, *Uzlina*, *Jurilovca*, *Slava Rusă*, *Slava Cercheză*, *Ciucurova*, Island *Sahalin*, Lakes *Isacov*, *Obretinul Mare* and *Obretinul Mic*, canals *Litcov* and *Lopatna*, etc.

## 1.5. OLD TURKISH TOPONYMS

**1.5.1. Toponyms of Petcheneg – Cumanian origin.** Toponyms found especially in the low steppe and pre-steppe areas from the south and east of Romania are a clear proof that the Petchenegs and the Cumans (who spoke the same language) did not rule only “on horseback” as the saying went, but settled down, mostly close to running waters and lakes, naming them with words from their own language. Subsequently they would mix up with the Romanians, leaving a relatively rich toponymy, still in use today. Toponyms referring in principal to waters being suffixed in *-l (ui)*, are found in the Danube Plain and Floodplain, in Oltenia and Muntenia up to Moldavia: *Bahlui*, *Călmățui*, *Călu*, *Desănțui*, *Gălățui* *Garmatalui*, *Teslui*, *Urlui*, and *Vaslui*, far more numerous in the past (Conea, Donat, 1958). Besides, there are also some oronyms, e.g. the *Bărăgan*, *Buceag* and *Burnaz* Plains (Ali Ekrem, 1994 cited by Nicolae, Suditu, 2008), as well as the *Covurlui* Plateau (Ungureanu, Boamfă, 2006), some of them being considered also hydronyms or oiconyms.

**1.5.2. Toponyms of Osmanli-Turkish and Tartar origin.** The over 400 years of Ottoman domination in the Romanian Countries has obviously left important traces in toponymy, moreover so, as Dobrogea was ruled and populated until 1878 by a majority Turkish-Tartar people. Therefore, the most numerous Osmanli-Turkish toponyms are currently found in the Dobrogea Plateau and the Danube Delta.

– Oronyms: *Ceatalul Ismail*, *Caraorman* (Black Forest) levee, *Teleorman* Plain (Pădurea Nebună – Mad Forest meaning full of dangers); hills: *Uzum Bair*, *Asmalar*, *Asan*, *Ozângele*, *Hagilar*, *Caradeniz*, *Alah Bair*, *Altân Tepe*, *Beștepe*, *Babadag*, the *Caraiman* Peak (anthroponym) in the Bucegi Mountains;

– Hydronyms: the valleys of *Aiorman*, *Başpunar*, *Canaraua Fetei*, *Dereaua Rahmanu*; *Teleorman* River; lakes: *Beibugeac*, *Babadag*, *Murighiol*, *Topraighiol*, *Siutghiol*, *Techirghiol*, *Agighiol*, *Sarighiol*, etc.

– Oiconyms: *Babadag*, formerly *Baba Salta* (the name of a great Turkish feudal lord), *Caraorman* (named in honour of Sultan Mahmud the 5<sup>th</sup>), *Medgidia* (<Sultan Medged), *Sarinasuf*, *Sarichioi*, *Nazarcea*, *Osmancea*, *Adam Clisi* (Man’s Church), *Aliman*, *Murflatar*, *Cogealac*, *Tariverde*, *Rahmanu*, *Altân Tepe*, *Congaz* (Hero’s Stopper), *Tatarbunar* (Tartar’s Fountain), *Tuzla* (Salty), etc. Isolated occurrences in other regions: *Caracal* (Black Stronghold) in Oltenia, *Ada Kaleh* (Stronghold on the Island), today it is only the name of a viaduct in the Danube Gorge, etc.

## 1.6. FINO-UGRIC TOPONYMS

**1.6.1. Toponyms of Hungarian origin.** The Hungarian authorities, having effectively ruled Transylvania for several centuries, would officially give and imposed lots of toponyms, which after 1918 were taken over and adapted to Romanian and preserved to the present day. At the same time, also the Hungarian population denominated settlements or places in which it was majoritar, or in totality, denominations assumed also by the Romanian and German people who lived in their proximity.

– Oronyms: *Oaş* Mts, *Oaşa* and *Iertaş* (Fallow Land) peaks, *Lăpuş* Mts. (Flat Place), *Harghita* Mts., *Mezeş* Mts. (Lowland), Mt. *Rez* (Copper), *Ardaşcheia* Peak (Wolf’s Stone), *Hagău* (Passageway), *Săcădate* (Rupture), *Surduc* (Gorge, Defile), etc.

– Hydronyms: *Arieş* (Golden River), *Sebeş* (Fast River), *Şieu* (Salt River), *Niraj* and *Miraş* (River with Birch-trees), *Cergău* (Murmuring River), *Chişveghi* (Small Valley), *Nodveghi* (Large Valley), *Chereteu* (Round Lake), *Sighiştel* (River with isles).

– Oiconyms: *Apahida* (Father's Bridge), *Asînip* (Lots of women), *Cisnădie* (Valley of Wild Boars), *Cenade* (Colt), *Căpuș*, *Căpuđ*, *Copșa Mare*, *Copșa Mică* (Copșa = Gate), *Căpâlna* (Chapel), *Căptâlan* (Cathedral), *Copand* (Vesper Bell), *Cheșcheș* (Goat), *Covaci* (Ironsmith), *Cut* (Fountain), *Șomcuta* (Fountain with Cornel-trees), *Lancrăm* (Round Coast), *Mănărade* (Hazel Wood), *Medveș* (Bear), *Nădăș* and *Nădăstia* (Willow), *Oiejdea* (Border Mark), *Poplaca* (Priest's Place), *Remetea*, *Râmeț* (Hermit, Hermitage), *Șercaia* (Serpent, Dragon), *Silivaș* (Plum area), *Teiuș* (Thorns), *Orlat* (Below the Fortress), *Oradea*, *Orăștie* (City), *Uioara* (New City), *Spătaț* (Saxons' Brook), *Veseuș* (Saxons' Twigs), *Șeușa* (Salty) (Iordan 1963).

– Anthroponyms: *Aiud* "Enyed", *Blaj* "Balász", *Alecuș* "Elekeș", *Loerinț*, *Laslea*, *Micoșlaca*, *Noșlac*, *Petrisat*, and *Vințu de Jos*.

### 1.7. TOPONYMS OF GERMAN ORIGIN

German colonists were brought into Transylvania by the Hungarian kings (12<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> cc), into Banat, Crișana, Maramureș and Bucovina by the Austrian emperors (18<sup>th</sup> cent.) and around Satu Mare Town by the Magyar nobility (19<sup>th</sup> cent.). They would give German names to their settlements (some 290) and to the places encompassed by them. These names were partly taken over by the Hungarian and Romanian population and authorities.

The denomination of some of the most important localities in particular, would be changed first by the Hungarian authorities and after the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918, by the Romanian authorities: *Hermannstadt* > *Nagy Szeben* > *Sibiu*, *Kronstadt* > *Brasso* > *Brașov*, *Schäßburg* > *Segesvár* > *Sighișoara*, *Klausenburg* > *Kolozsvár* > *Cluj*, *Mühlbach* > *Szász Sebes* > *Sebeș*, *Broos* > *Szasz Város* > *Orăștie*, etc.

That would explain why some foreign authors, mainly those settled in Germany after the Second World War, used to write that the Romanian administration made massive changes in the old Transylvanian names of German origin, replacing them with Romanian ones. It should be underlined that there are currently 220 official settlement names of German origin, or referring to Germans. The Romanian administration modified only 25 such names, most of them (50), having been changed by the Hungarian administration and taken over as such by the Romanians. It is worth remembering that German denominations are being preserved in Romania, whereas in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary they have been thoroughly changed. This is a strong argument to the effect that national minorities in this country are entitled to maintain their traditional denominations (Buza 1999).

In terms of the oldness of German settlements, of the colonists' birth-place and of the social-historical conditions, one finds several categories of German toponyms:

**a) Toponyms maintaining the German name unaltered**, especially in Banat, where the Swabians arrived rather recently, after 1718: *Altringen*, *Bethausen*, *Charlottenburg*, *Eibenthal*, *Gottlob*, *Johannisfeld*, *Lenaheim*, *Liebling*, *Lindenfeld*, *Neudorf*, *Nitzkidorf*, *Steierdorf*, *Tirol*, etc.

**b) Toponyms slightly modified**, largely in Transylvania, but in which the original German term is easily recognisable: *Agnita* < Agnetheln, *Alțâna* < Alzenau, *Apold* < Trapold (Ms) and *Apoldu de Sus* < Großpold (Sb), *Berghin* < Berwindsdorf, *Bungard* < Baumgarten (Orchard), *Chesler* < Kessler (anthroponym), *Criț* < Kreuz (Cross), *Doștat* < Dürstatt (Dry place), *Felmer* < Felmer, *Ghirolț* < Gherolsdorf (anthroponym), *Henig* < Henningsdorf, *Mălingrav* < Malinkrog, *Meșendorf* < Meschendorf, *Moardăș* < Mardish, *Noistadt* < Neustadt, *Reciu* < Rättsch (Landslides), *Rodbav* < Rohrbach (Brook with Willows), *Rotbav* < Rothbach (Red Brook), *Seligștat* < Seligstadt (Happy Place), *Șelimbăr* < Schellenberg (Schell's Hill), *Șoala* < Schaalbach, *Șona* < Schönau (Beautiful River Meadow), *Șpring* < Spring (Spring), *Târpiu* < Treppen (Stairway), *Tătârlaua* < Taterloch (Tartar's Dan), *Vărd* < Werdt, etc. (Scheiner, 1926).

**c) Toponyms very much modified** because of their antiquity. This is the case exclusively in Transylvania, where Saxon colonists had arrived after the year 1150, speaking several mediaeval

German dialects, one of which is being preserved now only in Luxembourg. Despite having suffered alterations along Hungarian lines for 800 years, the basic German word is still detectable: *Apoș* < Abtsdorf (Abbot's Village), *Ațel* < Hetzelsdorf, *Bruiu* < Brunnweiler (Fountain's Hamlet), *Calbor* < Kaltborn (Cold Fountain), *Cașoț* < Kastenholtz (Oak Forest), *Chirpăr* < Kirchberg (Fortress Hill), *Cincu* < Schenke (The Pub), *Cloașterf* < Klosterdorf (Monastery's Village), *Cobor* < Kaltborn (Cold Fountain), *Crizbav* < Krebsbach (Crayfish Valley), *Feldern* < Felder (Fields), *Fișer* < Schweiser (The Welder), *Fofeldea* < Hochfeld (Upper Field), *Gerdeal* < Gertrudental (Gertrude's Valley), *Ghimbav* < Weidenbach (Willows' Brook), *Ghirbom* < Birnbaum (Pear), *Hamba* < Hahnbach (Cock's Brook), *Hosman* < Holzmengen (Wood Pile), *Ilimbav* < Eulenbach (Owl's Brook), *Lechința* < Leckendorf (Dry Village), *Merghindeal* < Mergenthal (Marly Valley), *Mighindoala* < Engelthal (Narrow Valley), *Moruț* < Moritzdorf, *Nocrih* < Neukirch "(New Church), *Ocland* < Hochland, (Tableland).

**d) Toponyms of German origin translated into, or adapted to Romanian:** *Albeștii Bistriței* < Weißkirch bei Bistritz, *Băgaciu* < Bogeschdorf (Ms)\*, *Dealul Frumos* < Schönberg (Sb), *Domnești* < Adelsdorf (BN), *Ghinda* < Windau (BN), *Glăjăria* < Glashütte (Ms), *Jacobeni* < Jakobsdorf (Sb), *Măgheruș* < Maniersch (Ms), *Noul* < Neudorf (Sb), *Noul Săsesc* < Neudorf (Sb), *Movile* < Hundertbücheln (Bv), *Petiș* < Petersdorf (Sb), *Petrești* < Petersdorf (Ab), *Petrești* < Petrifeld (SM), *Petriș* < Petersdorf (BN), *Roșia* < Rothberg (Sb), *Satu Nou* < Oberneudorf (Bv), *Sâniacob* < Jakobsdorf (BN), *Sânpetru* < Petersberg (Bv), *Sântioana* < Johannisdorf (Bv), *Șomartin* < Martinsberg (Sb), *Șura Mare* < Großscheuern (Sb), *Șura Mică* < Kleinscheuern (Sb), *Valea Lungă* < Langental (Sb), *Vulcan* < Wolkendorf (Bv). We consider them translations because the first documentary attestations were in German (Suciu 1967, 1968, Wagner 1977).

## CONCLUSIONS

Toponymy is part of the spiritual heritage of the Romanian people and of the national minorities, adding information to the description and presentation of a region. Many denominations are a plastic representation of various qualities of a place, others highlight the Romanian people's antiquity and continuity on his ancestral land, basically the Carpathian – Danubian – Pontic (Black Sea) space. The reality clearly refutes the immigration theory whereby the Romanians had come from south of the Danube, beginning to "infiltrate" themselves into Transylvania since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, that is after the Hungarians, the Saxons and the Swabians had settled there. Local toponymy shows the name of some main rivers to be of Daco-Getae origin, having been preserved orally to this very day, e.g. the *Danube*, *Mureș*, *Olt*, *Criș*, *Ampoi*, *Timiș*, etc. and taken over in a very similar form by the Hungarian and German populations arrived in Transylvania after the 11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Besides, there are the old Slavic names of some rivers, dating to the 7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> cc A.D., which the new conquerors adapted or replaced.

Detailed field investigations and the study of numerous published works (partially listed in the Bibliography) help Romanian geographers to elaborate a diversity of toponymic maps on a wide range of aspects (Oancea 1976, 1984). These maps may cover the whole Romanian territory, a historical province alone, a county, a commune or a village, as well as a certain physico-geographical region, such as a massif, a plain, a depression, etc. Like maps, which other specialists (linguists, historians and ethnogeographers) are sporadically producing, would represent the contribution of geographers to the knowledge of Romanian toponymy.

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\* Parentheses represent the respective county.

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