

# How the Romanians Say it, in the People's Words

## Romanian Words in Latin Transylvanian Documents

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### Introduction

**P**ROPER AND common nouns, originating from vernacular languages, often present in some Medieval Latin documents, have a great importance for reconstructing the past and may, very often, indicate the ethnicity of their bearers, notaries or people living in certain places.

### Romanian Names of Places

**A**LREADY IN 1944, the historian Ion Moga inventoried a number of Romanian toponyms in Transylvania and its neighboring regions, all mentioned in medieval Latin documents, of course in corrupt, but easily identifiable forms: *Kapreuar* or Căprioara, in 1337, *Nuksora* for Nucșoara, in 1359, *Charamida* (*Charamada*) or Cărămida, in 1364, *Margina* (Marginea) in 1365, *Radesd* (Rădești) in 1369, *Zekulay* (Săcălaia) in 1379, the *Neutidul* Mountains (Netedul) and *Nedele* (Nedeia) in 1307 and 1373, respectively, the rivers *Riusor* or Râușor (1377), *Chernyswara* or Cernișoara (1380), *Stramba* or Strâmba (1390) and many others<sup>1</sup>. Some of these toponyms have fascinating stories, brought to light under special circumstances. Many underwent such transformations while they were rendered by scribes (notaries, chancellors) who did not know Romanian that it is now almost impossible to grasp their real Romanian sonority.

For instance, on 24 July 1364, reporting to King Louis I about the demarcation of the Icuș estate (probably a district) for the Romanians Stanislau and Carapciu and their brothers, the chapter house in Cenad notes, along with the situation of the boundaries, many toponyms, including “a place commonly called Teglauar, that is, as the Romanians say, Cărămida [brick], where two boundary signs have been raised “(*unum locum Teglauar vocatum, vulgariter, secundum vero Olachos, Charamada vocatum, ubi sunt due mete terre erecte*)<sup>2</sup>. One can see how the Romanian name of the place—Cărămida [brick]—given by the locals in their language, was reproduced in Hungarian, in agree-

ment with the notary's language. At other times, different methods were chosen, as in the case of the toponym Valea: a document issued on 20 May 1378, after a long trial with the old Romanian owners of princely origin, certified that the judge of the royal court had awarded the *Woya* estate in Banat to Benedict Himfy, the former ban of Bulgaria; in that context it was said that, in 1342, King Charles Robert had given, for eternity, for faithful endeavours, to the Romanians Mihail [Michael], Ioan [John] and Nicolae [Nicholas], sons of Petru [Peter], son of *Tyuan*<sup>3</sup>, the place where they lived, called *Patak*, in the Ilidia district, and that this place "is called *Woya*<sup>4</sup> by another name." But the Hungarian word *patak* means "valley," which shows that the name *Woya* is the corrupt version of the Romanian "Valea." Similarly, the name *Nogfalu*, in Hungarian, *Gorozdorf* in Saxon or *Magna Villa walachialis* in Latin, are nothing but the translations into these three languages of the Romanian-Slavic toponym Săliște (attested about two decades before the names in German and Hungarian), in 1383, which both mean "big village"<sup>5</sup>. Other Romanian (or Romanian-Slavic) place names, attested in forms close to the original, are Cuiеști (*Kuesd*), Secaș (*Scekus*) and Gârliște (*Gralista*), in Banat, on 3 August 1351<sup>6</sup>, Ampoița (*Ompeyicha*) and Abrud (*Abrudbana*), in Alba, on 2 June 1320<sup>7</sup>, Ampoița (*Ompajcz*) again and Filești (*Fylesd*), in Alba, in 1369<sup>8</sup>, Cacova (*Kakoua*), near Sibiu, on 24 November 1366<sup>9</sup>, Ciuta (*Chuta*) in Banat, in 1411<sup>10</sup>, Bârsana (*Barzanzfalua*), Maramureș, 1390,<sup>11</sup> etc. Besides, in Maramureș, the villages of Cămârzana, Călinești, Copăcești, Crăcești, Crăciunești, Crăiniceni, Crișănești, Criva, Dănești, Darva, Desești, Dragomirești, Gănești, Hărnicești, Ieud, Iza, Lipceni, Moisei, Nănești, Neagova, Oncești, Rozavlea, Săcel, Săliște, Săpânța, Uglea, Bilca<sup>12</sup>, etc. are in the same situation, all recorded in the form of names containing the Romanian or Romanian-Slavic terms from which these names derive. The same process is seen in Hațeg County and its vicinity, with the settlements of Balomir, Bărești, Bar, Băiești, Bărișor, Breazova, Britonia, Bucova, Bunila, Călan, Câmpul lui Neag, Cernișoara, Cârnești, Chitid, Ciula, Clopotiva, Costești, Crăguieș, Criva, Crivadia, Densuș, Dumbrăvița, Fărcădin, Galați, Grid, Hobița, Hățăgel, Leșnic, Lingina, Livadia, Ludești, Mălăiești, Mățești, Merișor, Muncel, Nălați, Nucșoara, Ohaba, Ohăbița, Ostrov, Ostrovel, Paroș, Păcliaș, Peșteana, Petros, Peștiș, Plăișor, Poienița, Ponor, Pui, Răchita, Răchitova, Răușor, Săcel, Sânpetru, Sibișel, Strei, Streisângeorgiu, Stroești, Șerel, Ștei, Totești, Tuștea, Unciuc, Uric, Vad, Valea, Zăicani, Zlaști<sup>13</sup>, etc. We find such names in Banat as well: Agriș, Almăj, Baci, Bădra, Belibuc, Berliște, Besna, Biniș, Bizerea, Bogdan, Bogăltin, Borziuc, Bolvașnița, Bratoca, Bruznic, Caran, Caransebeș, Carașova, Caraș, Cerna, Cernet, Ciuta, Comiat, Cornet, Criva, Cuiеști, Dobrogoste, Dobroian, Dobrotă, Dragotă, Dubrul, Gamza, Gârliște, Goruia, Grădiște, Grebenaș, Gurea, Hălmeag, Ianova, Iancu, Ilidia, Jupa, Leordiș, Lugoj, Luncavița, Maciova, Mal, Margina, Măciș, Măgoiești, Mătnic, Mehădia, Miculești, Mihăești, Mihălinț, Neacșu, Novac, Ohaba, Ohăbița, Pleșa, Pogănici, Prisaca, Ramna, Rădești, Rădulenți, Rudăria, Ruginosu, Săcel, Săliște, Sebeș, Secaș, Severin, Stancu, Stăvarcea, Strâmtura, Surduc, Surian, Șoșdea, Timișel, Tincova, Toplicean, Toplița, Turcu, Valea, Vozești, Sanislau, Zăzești, Zăvoi, Zorlent<sup>14</sup>, etc.

Quite often, however, Romanian names, after being used in parallel with the Hungarian ones, were changed entirely, depending on the patronage of the Catholic chapels newly founded for the Hungarian masters or on other criteria. Thus, a document from 1230

mentions the village of Sântejude, near Gherla, in connection with an older donation (made to some noblemen coming from Hungary), by the name *Wesscel*, later mentioned as *Vizoulteluk* (1291) or *Vascultelke* (1315). The name *Zent Egjed* (Sant Egidio) is mentioned only in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, as the patron of the Catholic church, mentioned in 1331. Therefore, the village was first named Vescel, Vâscel or Vascul/Vâscul, a toponym with a Romanian resonance if we consider the diminutivization and the enclitic masculine definite article *-l*. Originally, the name was taken as such (with the adapted spelling), with the ending *-telek* (*-telke*), meaning “place,” “land,” “piece of land,” added in a new stage. After the village entered in the estate of the Wass family and a Catholic church dedicated to St. Egidio (Szent Egyed) was founded in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the name Sancto Egidio or *Scenth Egud*, with its variants, was adopted<sup>15</sup>. That name, strange for Transylvania, shows precisely the extra-Transylvanian, Western origin of the Wos family; there is no other church in Transylvania with this patron, but there is one instead in Vas County in Hungary, where the Wass family probably comes from<sup>16</sup>. The same happened with Oncești in Maramureș, also called *Văralia* (Sub Cetate) in 1360, with Tohan (near Brașov), called *Olahteleky* (The Romanian Land), with Beznic (in Banat), later named *Abosfalva*, with Mihalt (Alba), “*Kozeprvinc*, by another name” (Vințul de Mijloc), with Nedele (Nedeie), later named *Węsagharasa*, etc. For many other villages the Romanian names were translated into Hungarian: Văleni (Maramureș) becomes *Patak*, Râu Bărbat, Râu Alb, Râu de Mori, Grădiște, Rea in Hațeg become *Borbatviz*, *Feheviz*, *Malomviz*, *Vărbel*, respectively *Gunazfolu*, and Măru, Neacșu, Spini or Prisaca in Banat, become, in Hungarian, *Almafa*, *Nexefalua*, *Novakfalua*, *Tyvis*, respectively *Gyepew*, etc. In the Middle Ages, the village of Grădiște (a name with Slavo-Romanian resonance, acquired during the cohabitation of latinophones with the Slavic population), in Hațeg County—where the ancient Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, the capital of Roman Dacia, was located—preserved, for a while, the Romanian name Brătunia<sup>17</sup> or Bătrâna<sup>18</sup>, translated into Latin documents as *Brethonia*.

In some cases, the Romanian names of places are given Hungarian endings, as in the examples: *Kopachfalwa*, *Dezefalwa*, *Hernyachfalwa* (document concerning Maramureș, dated 12 October 1365<sup>19</sup>). These names of villages (*falva/falu* means village) come from common nouns and adjectives in Romanian, such as “tree,” “often” and “diligent.” “Satul lui Stancu” [Stancu’s Village] appears as *Ztankfolua* (document from Banat, issued on 29 March 1378<sup>20</sup>). In the same documents from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, under the corrupt or adapted spelling of the scribe (*Terra Moldavana*, *Zlatyna*, *Zeleste*, *Vysson*, *Moyze*)<sup>21</sup>, one may recognize traditional local names such as Țara Moldoveană, Slatina, Săliște, and Moisei. The Romanian resonance of some toponyms in Hațeg can be seen in a document dated 8 June 1377<sup>22</sup>, issued in Alba Iulia: *fluvium Ryusor* (with the variant *Ryusoor*)..., *villam Olacalem Thuelyfalw vocatam...*, *quatuor villas Olachales Brazua, Bradath, Walee et Ohaba vocatas*. It refers to the Romanian toponyms Râușor (river and village), Breazova, Brădet (later called Zeicani), Vale (later named Păucinești) and Ohaba (later named Hobița). The name of the Romanian village *Thuelyfalw* (located about 2 km from Sarmizegetusa and no longer in existence) probably comes from the noun “tei” [linden tree]. On 12 September 1380<sup>23</sup>, the name appears, still in a Romanian context, as *terra Polonycza vocatam penes rivulum Cernyswara*, namely “the land called Poienița, located

on the river Cernișoara.” “Poienița” is the Romanian diminutive of the common noun “poiana” [glade].

## Romanian Common Nouns

**S**URPRISING ROMANIAN common nouns such as *cergă* [rug] (1331), *cămămidă* [brick] (1364), *pod* [bridge] (14<sup>th</sup> century), *baltă* [pond] (1418), some of them now toponyms, appear quite early. All of them are mentioned in a Romanian context and in connection with the Romanians. For example, on 7 March 1418, Pippo of Ozora (Filippo Scolari), earl of Timiș, relating about a demarcation of estates made for two groups of Romanians who were in conflict, in the presence of “certain honest and noble knezes” (*certos probos et nobiles kenezijos*), mentions “a certain swamp called *Fertes*, named Balta [pond] in Romanian” (*quendam paludem Fertes vocatum, in volacho Baltha dictum*)<sup>24</sup>. As in other cases, the Romanian noun pond (now a toponym) is rendered in Latin as *palus*, *-dis* (= swamp) and *fertes* (= slime) in Hungarian, taken as synonyms. In 1202, the Romanian name Ficior (an anthroponym also originating in a common noun) is mentioned as *Fichur*, north of Oradea, near the “Bihor fortress”<sup>25</sup>. It would later become the nickname of some members of the Romanian family called More, from Ciula Hațegului. When certain Romanian words could not be rendered in their original form, but it was intended (very rarely, otherwise) to indicate them, phrases are used. Thus, in a document dated 26 July 1368, relating a contention between serfs, one of them had to give to the other, inter alia, two pairs of sandals called “Romanian shoes” (*caligas Olachales*)<sup>26</sup>.

Of particular importance are the names of social categories, offices, authorities, types of status, which exist in Romanian and are reproduced in Latin texts. Hence, the noun *cnez* [knez] or *chinez* is mentioned, taken into Romanian from Slavonic, but absorbed by the Slavs from old German (*kunig*, *kenig*, namely prince, king). The Romanian knezes are old Romanian leaders of communities, now ruling over villages or parts of villages, with their own subjects. The area ruled by a knez was called a *cnezat* [principality]. These names are rendered in Latin texts in various forms. Thus, on 8 November 1352, *quenesi in provincia Seebus* (“the knezes from Caransebeș County”)<sup>27</sup> are mentioned, and a year later (on 29 November 1353), the same leaders, this time in the Ciceu region in northern Transylvania, appear as *kenezj* (*Olachos suos et kenezijos* = his Romanians and knezes)<sup>28</sup>. Other forms of the word “knez” are *ipsi kenesii* (1363)<sup>29</sup>, *Iuan kenezzyo* (1369)<sup>30</sup>, *Nicolaus quenessius* (1376)<sup>31</sup>. The term *cnezt*, derived from *cnez* [knez] has fewer variations: *keneziat*, *kenezatus*, *kenezjatus*. The name “voivode” (Romanian-Slavic term), used in connection with the Romanians, has various forms as well: *vaivoda*, *voivoda*, *woyvoda*, *waywoda*, *woyvada*, *woyvoda*, etc. There were many Romanian voivodes in the Medieval kingdom of Hungary, more precisely in Transylvania, Maramureș, Banat, Crișana, Ung, Bereg, Ugocea, etc., but only one of them was officialised, Transylvania, ruled by a leader called voivode, appointed by the Hungarian king. Initially, the old local voivodes were recognized in this position. The same process that took place earlier in Transylvania

happened in Maramureş in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Here, in the voivodate of Maramureş, one can see how the Romanians' voivodes, chosen by the gathering of the country's knezes, are accepted as rulers by the Hungarian king as well. However, the difference in relation to Transylvania is that the old Romanian voivodes are appointed by the king as earls, the old voivodate gradually becoming, towards the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a county in the kingdom of Hungary. The term voivode, officially preserved in Transylvania until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, entered in Hungarian as *vajda*.

Equally interesting are the names given to Romanians in the Latin and Hungarian Transylvanian documents. The old forms, found also in narrative sources, are *blacus*, *vlachus*, *valachus*, *volachus*, etc., stemming apparently from the name of the first Romanized Celtic tribe, *volcae* or *vlocae*. Due to the specificity of Hungarian, *vlachus* turned into *olachus* or *olabus*. In the Latin texts of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, both forms (*vlachus* and *olachus*) are to be found, with the predominance of the second. Examples: *Olachi* (1353), *Olaci* (1355), *Olaki* (1357), *Volaci/Volachi* (1357), *Holahi* (1363), *Valachi* (1366), *Wlachones* (1474), *Walchi* (1373). The latter forms, quite bizarre, come from Western, papal documents, where the realities of Transylvania and Hungary were little known. All these variants originate from the languages spoken to the west and north of the regions inhabited by Romanians. They are vernacular words adapted to Latin, words designating the Romance peoples. As in Southeast Europe the Romanians were the only Latinophones, *Valachus* and its derivatives refer to Romanians. For example, the form *Olahus* is modeled in Medieval Latin after Hungarian, where the Romanian is called *olah* and the Italian *olasz*.

## Names of People

**T**HE MOST fascinating is, however, the Romanian anthroponymy present in Latin documents related to Medieval Transylvania and the surrounding regions. It is generally of Latin and Romanian-Slavic origin, but it includes many calendar names, even from the Catholic calendar. The double names for the same person start to emerge now, a Romanian traditional name and one chosen from among the usual Hungarian names, usually from the Catholic calendar. The tendency is only beginning in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but it will increase in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the best known case being that of the Hunedoara brothers, the sons of Voicu, called Iancu and Ivaşcu at home, in the Romanian Orthodox environment, and Ioan [John] in society, in the their official elitist world, among Hungarians and Westerners (Ivaşcu's early death precluded another distinctive name in relation to Ioan [John])<sup>32</sup>. Double names could result from a new, Catholic, baptism, as it happened with the Romanian Şerban, who became Ştefan [Stephen]: on 16 May 1366, in Cluj, King Louis I gave the news that his faithful servant, the Romanian Şerban of Aciuă, had become Ştefan [Stephen] through baptism in the Catholic rite, receiving as a gift the Aciuă estate neighbouring Aciuă (villages in Arad county), having the obligation to donate each year the sheep fiftieth tax, the pigs tax and to provide faithful services in the future as well<sup>33</sup>. Baptism did not mean however abandoning the old name, which continued to be used at home, where they could practice

biritualism (attendance of both Orthodox and Catholic churches). The new name usually had the resonance of the old one: Șerban—Ștefan, Șerban or Șurban—Urban, Radul or Ladul—Ladislau, Vladislav—Ladislau etc. But most Romanian ennobled knezes, who remained small feudal leaders in their villages, continued to keep the old traditional names, along with the Byzantine faith and the whole complex of beliefs, customs and traditions called “Romanian law.”

The names of rulers from south of the Carpathian Mountains are very often recorded in Transylvania, in surprising forms and circumstances. Litovoi, Seneslau, Tihomir, Basarab, Vlaicu, Dan, Vlad, Radu, Mircea, Aldea, etc. appear like this, as the names of the country’s founders, of the founders of the dynasty and of the rulers of Țara Românească [Wallachia]; likewise, one may meet Dragoș, Bogdan, Mușat, Lațcu, Iuga, etc., founders and members of the Moldavian dynasty. Moreover, all the names of noblemen, ladies and princesses, courtiers and servants from south and east of the Carpathians are found again in Transylvania, Banat and the neighbouring regions.

To illustrate this, let’s take a look at an almost forgotten document, issued on 12 August 1389, concerning Banat, where dozens of Romanian names are enumerated, belonging essentially to small knezes, still owners of their subjects, and their homes<sup>34</sup>. Thus, the following are mentioned: 20 serfs and an empty courtyard, plus three mills “on the river commonly known as Pogănici” (*Poganch*); Marcu Ștefan, son of Drăgușa (*Draguchsa*); Marcu cel Mic [Little], Vasile (*Basilius*), Knez Răduș (*Rados*), Brateș (*Brethes*) and Dracșa (*Draxa*), George, Dionisie, Mușat (*Musa*), Miliță (*Milita*), Bogdan, Radul, widow of Stoian (*relicta Stoyani*); then there are four or 24 knezates [principalities] (the document has gaps and has been deciphered with difficulty), five serfs and an empty position in the knezate [principality] of Knez Neacșu (*Nexa*), located on the part of Pricul or Precul village (*Prekofalua*); also mentioned are Knez Prodan (*Proda*) with four of his serfs, Knez Stancu (*Stank*) with six of his serfs, Knez Dobrușa (*Dobrucha*) with nine of his serfs; the village Borziuc (*Borzlyuk*) appears next, with 21 serfs, out of whom seven, namely, Văsiel (*Woszeel*), Solozlău (*Salazla*), Dușa or Ducșa (*Duxa*), Mogoș (*Magas*), Ilie (*Iliam*), Călin (*Calyn*) and an empty position (without serf), were located right in Borziuc, while other 13 serfs lived on the estate called Săceu or Săcel (*Zacho*), belonging to Borziuc as well; furthermore, the estate of Jupa (*Supafalua*) included six serfs and was equalled with the previous two, namely Borziuc and Săcel; Drușan (*Drusanfalua*) estate follows, with nine serfs, the estate of Sanislăul Cnezesc [of the knez] (*Zanislo Kenezfalua*) with eight serfs, the village of Hălmeagul Cnezesc [of the knez] (*Halmagi Kenezhaza*) with two serfs, and Ionușu Cnezesc [of the knez] (*Ianuskenezfalua*) with 18 serfs; in a portion of the mentioned Jupa lived Knez Ioan [John] and a serf; in the villages called Nicolae [Nicholas] (*Miklofalua*) and Lupu (*Farkasfalua*), belonging to Remetea, there were 15 serfs; in Râșca village (*Rachkfalua*) there were 14 serfs; in Drășani (*Drasanfalua*) three; in the village of Fileșu Cnezesc [of the knez] (*Phileskenezfalua*) 15; in Giur (*Gyurfalua*) 11; the serfs of the village of Cheșa Cnezescă [of the knez] (*Kechakenez*) are mentioned by name, namely, Cheșa cnezul [the knez], Lădean (*Laden*) Bogdan, Duie (*Duya*), Anca (*Anka*), Nicolae, Mihu (*Myhe*) Bogdan, Gheorghe Dragomir (*Dragmer*), Gheorghe Balea (*Balya*), Boriac (*Baryak*), Ioan, Oprișa (*Opprisa*) and Bușea or Bucea (*Bucha*); likewise, the serfs Ruja (*Ruza*), another Ruja, Lădulea (*Ladula*), Gheorghe, Fileș (*Fyles*), Ștefan,

Drășan (*Drasan*), Bogdan, Noșa (*Nosa*), Dâncu (*Dank*), Iuan (*Iwan*), Pușă (*Pousa*), Stanul (*Stanol*), Ionuș (*Janus*), Dobrușa, Dragomir, Filipaș (*Fylepes*) and Ioan, located there as well; then, the serfs Nicolae, Iuan, Buda, Dumitru, Gheorghe, Radeș (*Rades*), Oprișa, Roman, Stoian, Mircea (?) (*Mrisauch*) and Lacea (*Lacha*), in the same place; there is also the village of Moian (*Mayanfalu*) with its mill located on the river Bârzava (*Borzua*), the village of Knez Nicolae [Nicholas] (*possessio Nicolai kenezii*) with 24 serfs, “the village of Nicolae [Nicholas], son of Pribil” (*Pribilfyamyclosfalu*) with 24 serfs and a mill, also located on the river Bârzava; the Cuiеști district appears, too (*districtum de Kwesd*), emptied of inhabitants, etc.

Another example, from 1353, taken from the boundaries of Transylvania, speaks about *castellanus de Chycho, Olachos suos et kenezjos, videlicet Petrum, filium Michaelis, Iula, Iwan, filium Brerer, Wayk, Frath et Iwan Longum ... destinasset* (“the castellan of Ciceu sent his Romanians and knezes, namely, Petru [Peter], son of Mihai [Michael], Iula, Iuan [John], son of Brerer, Voicu, Fratu and Iuan cel Lung [Long John].”<sup>35</sup> In a document of 12 October 1355, the following names given to Romanians are mentioned: *Iohannes, Iga, Dragus (filius Gyula, filii Dragus), Stephanus, Tatar, Dragamer, Kuzta, Myruzlo*<sup>36</sup>. It is clear that Ioan [John] and Ștefan [Stephen]—calendar names—are rendered in the form established in Medieval Latin and not as they were pronounced by Romanians. In the case of the others, an attempt was made to render them phonetically, close to the pronunciation of their bearers, and they must have sounded in the Romanian language of the time as follows: Iuga, Drăguș or Dragoș, Tătar, Dragomir, Costea and Mirăslău. *Gyula* must have been pronounced in Romanian *Giula* or *Giulea*, where the village name *Giulești* resulted from. Almost the same characters appear after exactly ten years, on 12 October 1365, as loyal Romanian servants of the king (*fidelibus suis Vlachys*) in the form: *Gywle, filio Dragus ... item Stephano, Myroslawo presbitero, et Dragomer, filiis eiusdem Gywle*. Despite some phonetic differences in rendering, they are *Giula*, son of Drăguș, Ștefan [Stephen], the priest from Mirăslău, and Dragomir.

According to a testimony from 6 August 1351<sup>37</sup>, some Romanians living west of Maramureș, in Ugocea County, were called *Zerechen, Nicolaus, Balathin et Rugas, filii Karachun, woyvade de Bilke*. *Nicolaus* is again a calendar name, easy to render in Romanian, *Zerechen* can be Sărăcin and *Karachun* is undoubtedly Crăciun [Christmas]. The other two are however impossible to identify. By chance, a document from 8 December 1363<sup>38</sup>, where almost the same sons of the Romanian Voivode Crăciun of Bilca are mentioned, helps us understand them: *Valentinum, Serechin et Luchasium, filios Karochon, Valacos*. Therefore, *Balathin et Rugas*, from 1351, become Valentin and Luca in 1363. This difference in spelling is strange, especially since it concerns calendar names. It is highly unlikely that the scribe from 1351 has not understood the ordinary Catholic names Valentin [Valentine] and Luca [Luke]. Taking into account certain analogies of the time, it can be assumed that the old forms of traditional Romanian names (maybe Balotă or Paltin, for the first, Rugoș or Lugoș for the second) were adjusted/changed, perhaps following the conversion of their titulars to Catholicism. The change was usually made with Catholic names that had the same resonance. On 30 December 1359<sup>39</sup>, a “voivode of Romanians” called *Bybarch*, appears in Hălmagiu (*Holmad*) along with a “*Reman Olachus*.” It’s almost impossible to tell what two names were in Romanian. On 14 May 1361<sup>40</sup>,

a document that refers to “our faithful Romanians from the Land of Maramureș” mentions *Bud, Sandor, Oprissa, Johannis, Dragomer et Bayla, filiorum Locovoy, fidelium Olachorum nostrorum de terra Maramarusiensi*, and speaks about a Romanian knezate [principality] (*keneziatum*), as well as about another Romanian (*similiter Olahus*) called *Stan dictus Fejyr*. The Romanian names must have been Bud or But (preserved in Maramureș until today), Șandru, Opriș, Ioan, Dragomir, Balea and Stan. Licovoi can very well be Litovoi (considering the graphical confusion between the consonants c and t). The names *Sandor* and *Fejyr* are Hungarian variants for Alexandru [Alexander] and Albul [The White]. From the Hungarianized nickname of Knez Stan, the Romanian name of the Ferești, the village in Maramureș, would result in time. On 3 March 1363<sup>41</sup>, “all knezes and old Romanians from Hațeg district” (*universis kenezis et senioribus Olachalibus districtus Haczak*) passed judgment by the laws of the knezes (*ius keneziale*) in a cause involving Romanian names such as *Musath, Stroja/ Sztroja, Zayk*. These might be the Romanian Mușat, Stroia or Stroe, and Zeicu or Țeicu.

In a document with legal force dated 2 February 1365<sup>42</sup> one can find the names *Bakdan* for Bogdan and *Dragmer* for Dragomir, and on 26 February 1365<sup>43</sup> Petru [Peter] Negoiu, Maxim and Roman are mentioned, as voivodes of the Romanians (*Petro de Kege, Neguoy, Maxin et Roman, voyvodis Olachorum*) next to a Knez Ilie (*Elya kenezio*). The same year (22 September<sup>44</sup>), other names are mentioned (*Karapch Olahus, filius Ladislai, filii Zarna Olachy ... Stanizlao, Negwe, Wayuk, Nicolao et Ladislao, filii Ladislai, filii Zarna*), belonging to certain Romanians from Țara Românească [Wallachia] who had been given estates in the Romanian districts of Marginea (*Margina*) and Icuș (*Ikus*), in Banat. Here as well we find the Hungarian forms of calendar names (Ladislau), common forms of calendar names (Nicolae), but also strange Romanian forms (Carapciu? Românul [The Romanian], Zârnă Românul [The Romanian], Stanislau, Neagu, Văiuc?). If we corroborate the information given here with that in the Act of 20 June 1371<sup>45</sup>, then Carapciu remains unchanged (*Karapch*), while Neagu is articulated (*Negul*) and *Ladislau* becomes *Layk*, namely, Vlaicu. On 3 July 1372<sup>46</sup>, among the men sent by the Romanian knezes and nobles to dig the ditch of the Orșova fortress, *Nexe, filius Kopach, Gouasdy, Stan kenezius, Radul kenezius, Iuan Ruphus, Karachon* are to be found, namely, Neacșu/Necșea, son of Copaciu, Găvoșdea, Knez Stan, Knez Radul, Iuan cel Roșu [John the Red], and Crăciun, respectively. The name Neacșu appears, on the same 3 July 1372, as *Nekche. Iohannes dictus Stoyan kenezius... Drag, filius Gyula, Gruhestan, Dragomer, Crichywan et Stanizlaus* from Maramureș are found in a document dated 1 July 1375<sup>47</sup>. They could be, in Romanian, Ioan, also called Stoian, the knez, Drag, son of Giula, Gruie Stan, Dragomir, Crișan or Criș Ioan/Criș Iuan and Stanislau. Other Romanians are mentioned on 6 July 1374<sup>48</sup>: *Stoykan, filius Dragmerii, filii Voyna de Laysta, Danchul, Neeg, Woyk, filius Raduzlu et Selibor*, namely, Stoican, son of Dragomir, son of Voinea of Loviște, Danciul, Neag, Voicu, son of Radoslau and Selibor/ Sălibor. An anthroponym, Stancu, gave the name of the village of *Ztankfolua*, mentioned on 29 March 1378<sup>49</sup>. On 12 September 1380<sup>50</sup>, one may find *Stoyan, filius Mosyna de Nyres, kenezius Olachorum de districtu castri Hatbzak*, namely, “Stoian, son of Mușină of Mesteacăn [birch], the knez of the Romanians from the district of Hațeg Fortress.” It is easy to see how the Romanian toponym Mesteacăn [Birch] was translated into Hungarian. Records kept at the Hungarian court at Visegrad



mention on 19 June 1376<sup>51</sup> *Bagdanum, filium Stephani et Radul, filium Wozunk* (later written *Woyruk*), which may suggest in Romanian Bogdan, son of Ștefan and Radul, son of Voinic or Voinuc. On 6 October 1378<sup>52</sup>, a Romanian noble born *ex nobili domina Margareta, filia Iwan, filii Myk de Urmezeu*, namely, “to the noble lady Margareta [Margaret], son of Iuan, son of Micu of Urmezeu” is mentioned. The name Margareta [Margaret] may suggest here the lady’s conversion to Catholicism, although it may well be only the translation of the name Mușata. An interesting onomastics emerges on 7 July 1376<sup>53</sup>, with *Sandrino, alio nomine Alexa vocato, filio Bochus dicto Ffichormiklous, filii Dorman de Dormanhaza de comitatu Maromorosiensis*, which means “to Sandrin, also called Alexa, son of Buhuș called Ficior Miclăuș, son of Dărman of Dărmănești in Maramureș County.” Sandrin is a diminutive of Alexa/Alexandru, while the nickname Ficior/Fecior (from the Latin *fetiolus*) shows how a common noun is about to become a proper noun. On 19 June 1376<sup>54</sup>, we find mention of a *Radul, filius Woznuk*, with the version *Woyruk*, suggesting a connection with the common noun “voinic [sturdy]” (of Slavonic-Romanian origin).

## Conclusions

**A**LL THESE names are particularly important not only from a historical point of view, but also from a philological one. Some of them are clear even in their Latin-Hungarian garb, but others can only be guessed at under the corrupt form in which they were rendered, due to the specificity of Medieval Latin, but also to the clumsiness of the notaries who did not know Romanian. From a historical point of view, the documents reveal a world of small princely masters of yesteryear, with their subjects called “serfs,” but also an ending world in terms of the old Romanian organization, now subordinated to other masters. However, knezes still had authority over their villages, lands and people, on whose work they perceived aliquots, as ever, but saving for themselves only a part; the rest went to the new masters. The names of knezes and serfs, but also the names of the old villages, are of old Romanian and Romanian-Slavic stock, many enclitically articulated or diminutized after the specificity of the Romanian language, or ending in Romanian suffixes. Some names of places and people are kept as such, as the locals pronounced them, although the spelling invariably transforms them. Others are maintained, but Hungarian endings such as *-falva*, *-falu*, *-telke*, *-telek*, *al-*, *fel-*, etc are added to them. In the case of names of places and people (especially nicknames), it is clear that they stem from common nouns or adjectives in Romanian. There are also examples of replacing old names with new ones, suited to the new rulers, or of abandoning archaic names for others.

Through these local words and phrases, present in documents written in Medieval Latin, one can trace the specificity of a world that sometimes leaves itself to be discovered with difficulty under the coating of chancellery language.



## Notes

1. I. Moga, *Les Roumains de Transylvanie au Moyen Age*, Sibiu, 1944, p. 50-71.
2. DRH, C, vol. XII, p. 295-303.
3. This is an example of Romanian name corrupted by the notary, difficult to trace back.
4. DRH, C, vol. XV, p. 413-438.
5. I. Moga, *Les Roumains de Transylvanie*, p. 61.
6. DRH, C, vol. X, p. 48.
7. DIR, C, 14<sup>th</sup> century, vol. I, p. 355-356.
8. DRH, C, vol. XIII, p. 568-569.
9. DRH, C, vol. XIII, p. 276-277.
10. F. Pesty, *Krassó vármegye*, vol. III, p. 269-270.
11. R. Popa, *Țara Maramureșului*, p. 66.
12. Ibid., p. 63-112.
13. Idem, *La începuturile Evului Mediu românesc*, p. 84-131.
14. D. Țeicu, *Banatul montan*, p. 290-400.
15. See I.-A. Pop, "De la lumea medievală la cea modernă," in Ioan Mârza (coord.), *Monografia comunei Țaga*, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 283-305.
16. The same can be said about the village of Sucutard, taking its name from St. Gothard (Sanctus Gothardus). See A. W. Kovács, *The History of the Wass de Czege Family*, Hamburg, 2005, p. 49.
17. Maria Holban, *Din cronică relațiilor româno-ungare*, p. 234-235. R. Popa, *La începuturile Evului Mediu românesc*, p. 87-89. Maria Holban derives the name *Brithonia* from Brătunia or Brătuaia, stemming from the antroponym Bratu. Radu Popa agrees with this opinion.
18. S. Brezeanu, *Identități și solidarități*, p. 283-286. Stelian Brezeanu proposes, bringing forward many analogies, the derivation of the corrupt form of *Brithonia* from the Romanian *Bătrâna*.
19. DRH, XII, p. 362-363.
20. DRH, XV, p. 387-390.
21. DRH, XII, p. 398-399.
22. DRH, XV, p. 248-251.
23. DHR, XV, p. 776-777.
24. F. Pesty, *Krassó vármegye*, vol. III, p. 284-287.
25. I. Moga, *Les Roumains de Transylvanie*, p. 49.
26. DRH, C, vol. XIII, p. 533-534.
27. DRH, C, X (1351-1355), Bucharest, 1977, p. 160-161.
28. Ibid., p. 239-241.
29. DRH, C, XII, p. 137-144.
30. DRH, C, XIII, p. 608-609.
31. DRH, C, XV, p. 1-3.
32. I.-A. Pop, "Numele din familia regelui Matia Corvinul: de la izvoarele de epocă la istoriografia contemporană," *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, vol. XXVI, 2008, p. 123-137.
33. DRH, C, vol. XIII, p. 100-101.
34. F. Pesty, *Krassó vármegye*, vol. III, p. 185-192.
35. DRH, C, X, p. 239-241.
36. Ibid., p. 362-364.
37. Ibid., p. 55-56.
38. DRH, XII, p. 192.
39. DRH, XI, p. 452-453.

40. DHR, XII, p. 27-29.
41. DRH, XII, p. 130-133.
42. DRH, XII, 398-399.
43. DRH, XII, p. 402-404.
44. DRH, XII, p. 444-448.
45. DRH, XIV, p. 56-60.
46. DRH, XIV, p. 237-240.
47. DRH, XIV, p. 564-566.
48. DRH, XIV, p. 472-473.
49. DRH, XV, p. 387-390.
50. DRH, XV, p. 776-777.
51. DRH, XV, p. 51-53.
52. DRH, XV, p. 487-495.
53. DRH, XV, p. 60-62.
54. DRH, XV, p. 51-53.

### **Abstract**

#### How the Romanians Say It, in the People's Words: Romanian Words in Latin Transylvanian Documents

The article analyses the use of Romanian and common nouns in various Latin Transylvanian medieval documents, as well as their importance in the reconstruction of our past. Some proper names are easily identifiable, others have been changed entirely after being used in parallel with Hungarian names, and others simply received a Hungarian ending. Most common names referred to names of social categories, functions, authorities, status, and had a Latin and Romanian-Slavic origin, similarly to the name of people. These names are important not only from a historical point of view, but also from a philological one; through them, one can trace the specificity of a world that sometimes allows itself to be discovered with difficulty under the coating of chancellery language.

### **Keywords**

Romanian names of places, Romanian common nouns, names of people, Latin Transylvanian documents, origin of nouns