A LINGUISTIC MAPPING OF HAGIOTOPONYMS IN PRESENT-DAY ROMANIA(N)

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Abstract: Traditionally, toponyms have played a greater role in historic and geographic and more recently in cultural and ethnologic as well as folklore contexts than in linguistics. Nevertheless, toponymy has an essentially linguistic nature, since its main concern is to identify the particular terms which account for the origins of place names. Although literature has considered the etymology and nature of toponymic sources, names of saints have been most often avoided in approaches to both international and Romanian toponymy. This paper maps focuses on the hagiotoponyms which have survived in the geographical nomenclature since the 14th century to this day and describes them from the formal, structural and distributional perspective, with both synchronic and diachronic references to their present-day Romanian usage.

Keywords: astionyms, commonyms, hydronyms, oikonyms, toponyms

1. Introduction

Toponymy or the study of toponyms has an interdisciplinary character as these geographic designations play an important role in the history, culture, civilization and language of a country. This is due to the fact that "the place names of a certain region can be structured from different standpoints, according to their researcher's concern. The way they come into being, as well as the role they play in the life of a people equally interests geographers, historians, ethnologists and linguists. This explains why all these specialists have felt attracted to toponymy in the broad sense of the word" (Iordan, 1963: 1). Although archaeologists, botanists and zoologists appear to take an interest in the study of toponyms, linguists intensified their research by the mid-twentieth century, when onomastics had already made its way among other branches of linguistics and ICOS (International Council of Onomastic Sciences) had been founded (in 1949). Their interest in toponyms has grown gradually as geographical names could provide information at "lexical, semantic, derivational, phonetic, grammatical and functional levels" (Boarcăş 2013: 124, my translation)[1].

Of the comprehensive list of toponyms, this paper will refer to one set only, i.e., the hagiotoponyms, those geographical appellatives which have their origins in names of saints. *Saint* is an ecclesiastic term, which is used as a honorific, being attributed to "a person who after death is formally recognized by a Christian Church, esp. the Roman Catholic Church, as having attained, through holy deeds or behaviour, a specially exalted place in heaven and the right to veneration" (CEDCU 2014). In a remote past the syntagm [Saint] + [Personal Name] [St.PN, henceforth] migrated from the ecclesiastical vocabulary both to the secular vocabulary and toponymy. The St.PN formula, with or without any other complementary element, represents a *hagionym* (< Greek *hagios* "sacred, devoted to the gods" (of things), "holy, pure"

[1] All of the Romanian quotations are my translations and, henceforth, this specification will not be repeated again

(of persons), in Ecclesiastical Greek, "a saint" + *onoma* "name") which plays the role of a toponym, hence a hagiotoponym. It is mostly used to identify (1) such population centres as: countries (*San Marino*), cities (*San Francisco*), towns (*San Remo, Saint Etienne*), villages (*Saint Edward*), (b) forms of relief (*St. Anastasia* ***Island***, *Saint Michael's* ***Mount***, *St. Donat's* ***Bay***), and waters (*the Saint Ana* ***Lake***).

This linguistic mapping of Romanian hagiotoponyms as they occur on the present-day landscape aims to highlight the lexical resourcefulness, formal flexibility and frequency of hagionyms in the geographical nomenclature. Written documents show them operable on the maps of this Eastern European country in the early 14th century, but soon after they fell into oblivion.

2. Materials, corpus and method of study

Several (re)sources were visited with a view to discovering and collecting the Romanian units into the corpus underlying this approach. A minute search of the map of Romania was made both empty-handedly and electronically, with the help of the Google search function. The scanning of the 41 Romanian administrative departments produced 105 hagiotoponyms, but after the elimination of the recurrent patterns, the corpus included 78 denominations. Of more than three hundred hagionyms in (both Catholic and Orthodox) Romanian calendars, only few behave as determiners and hence, because of their repetitiveness they are redundant to our study.

2.1. Sources and resources

The study of place names benefits from a century-old tradition in Romanian culture, being specifically manifest in the fields of history, geography and linguistics. Occasional references to toponymy have been made in ethnology, folklore and culture studies. The Romanian explorations of geographical names appear to have started in the mid-1800's, and their synchronic or diachronic interpretations mainly consider:

(a) aspects of regional toponymy (Moldovan 1853, Frățilă 1970);
(b) aspects of local toponymy (Avram 2013, Ghiaţău 2021, Opriţ-Maftei 2023);
(c) aspects of local hydronymy (Avram 2016)
(d) methodological approaches to the study of toponyms and the compilation of toponymic atlases and dictionaries (Alessandrescu 1893, Moldoveanu 1985);
(e) the interdisciplinary character of toponymy (Rezeanu 2008);
(f) the roles of radicals and affixes in creative toponymy (Brâncuș 1922, Goicu 1980);
(g) foreign elements in Romanian toponymy (Cornea 1993).

In spite of the existing toponymic literature, the current study mainly relied on the works of the iconic Romanian toponymists (Iordan 1963, Graur 1972 and Goicu 1999).

2.2. Corpus and methods of study

The corpus was extracted from both traditional and computer-based sources. The scanning of the *Road Atlas of Romania* (2014) and the *Bucureşti Street Guide* (2006) facilitated the manual selection of oikonyms, hydronyms and a few other oikonyms, discovered through the Google search of the postal codes book accessible through the webpage of the National Post Office, available at https://www.posta-romana.ro/cauta-cod-postal.html supplemented the corpus.

As this research is mainly analytical, its work methods intertwined the traditional and modern solutions which are peculiar to any survey and descriptive research:

(a) minute documentation through individual study which was intended to refresh and update the previously acquired theoretical and methodological aspects related to toponymy;
(b) creation of the study corpus;
(c) observation, analysis and interpretation of the findings;
(d) summary of conclusions.

The corpus analysis pinpointed both the general and particular orthographic traits of hagiotoponyms as well as the aspects regarding their distribution and frequency of occurrence in present-day Romania.

3. Theoretical specifications

Personal and geographical names have been demonstrated to migrate both from anthroponyms to toponyms and in the reverse direction, but classifications of these migratory onyms have not been provided yet. Few as they are, both the anthroponyms and hagionyms, which have been recategorized as toponyms, encapsulate stories about the relationship between a certain geographical entity and the person whose name was granted toponymy.

Minute inventories of toponymic sources were provided, among others, by Iordan (1963: 18-336) and Graur (1972: 29-38). Graur's brief outlook with its fourteen categories of sources includes:

(a) generalizations of tribe names (e.g. *Graeci*, the name of a tribe in Epirus, inspired the toponym *Greece*);
(b) geographical elements (e.g. *Egypt* is the old name of the Nile);
(c) cardinal points (e.g. the Scandinavian toponym *Sverige* means 'the South Empire');
(d) names of matters and creatures peculiar to a respective geographical spot (e.g. the *Ivory Coast* is rich in ivory; *Galapagos*, the Spanish common noun for "turtles" became a toponym);
(e) events which changed the course of history for the natives of a particular geographical area (e.g. *The Easter Island* was first visited by European navigators on an Easter Day);
(f) anthroponyms, including names of :
    i. sovereigns (e.g. *Louisiana* from Louis XIV, the French king);
    ii. politicians (e.g. *Rhodesia* from Cecil Rhodes, an English politician);
    iii. navigators and explorers of the planet oceans and seas (e.g. *America* from Amerigo Vespucci, the Florentine navigator).

America is an eponymic derivation for it bears the name of a navigator, but the *Republic of San Marino* is a hagionymic denomination, as it originates in *Saint Marinus*, the name of a saint. Ignored in specialist literature, hagionyms deserve inclusion in related inventories, albeit less productive.

The practice of giving names of saints to human settlements started by the end of the 6th century, when hagionyms were used as determiners of common nouns (Nicolae & Suditu 2008: 254). Later on, the respective saints became the acknowledged religious patrons of those very settlements. They have often further evolved from the determining role they would hold within a toponymic structure into a fully-acknowledged hagiotoponym. In other instances, most often in the early Middle Ages, hagionyms would become substitutes for pre-existent toponyms. In general, hagiotoponymy was less productive after the Middle Ages, but "wherever the Catholic Church would be a colonizer or a ruler, it would rely on hagiotoponymy; and this would include the Balkans as well" (Drăganu 1928: 118). This will be a good explanation to the high frequency of occurrence of hagiotoponyms in the central and western parts and their absence

in the eastern and southern regions of present-day Romania.
Although hagiotoponymy used to be as fashionable in Europe as it was in Latin America (Nicolae & Suditu 2008: 259-62), Romanian hagiotoponyms have been systematically waived. Iordan (1963: 243-4) draws their full list and makes a few diachronic and synchronic remarks, but avoids any morphological or syntactic analysis which he makes in the case of other categories of toponyms.

4. Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Our corpus comprises those names of saints commemorated by the Christian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches that were recategorized and used as toponyms, which may function as either oikonyms and/or hydronyms or as both. Recurrent oikonyms may occur in different departments (e.g. *Sânpaul* appears in Arad, Cluj, Harghita and Mureş, *Sânmartin* in Arad, Bihor and Harghita). Seven hagiotoponyms can be found in different departments: *Sânmiclăuş*, *Sântimbru*, *Sânsimion*, *Sâncraiu*, *Sânmărghita*, *Sâniacob* and *Sânpetru*, but because of their linguistic identity, they were counted just once in the corpus.

4.1. Aspects of Romanian hagiotoponyms

Orthographically, hagiotoponyms divide into (a) one- and two-word formations, (b) binomial structures and (c) three-word lexical units. One- and two-word formations refer literally to all those hagiotoponyms which are spelt in one or two words, while the binomial structures always consist of two independent morphemes which are also functional in present-day Romanian in numerous other distributions that exclude any reference to hagionyms. The three-word lexical units appear similar to the open-styled compound nouns consisting of two basic elements linked by a preposition.
Within the general word formation theory, Romanian hagiotoponyms fall into: (a) simple words, (b) compound words, (c) lexical ellipses and (d) alterations.

(a) One-word hagiotoponyms

All these formulas are related to *sanctus*, the Latin etymon, which may have overlapped *světŭ*, its meaningfully similar Slavic correspondent (Goicu 1999: 115).
Romanian toponymists view these solid-styled one-word formulas to be compounds, as in one lexical unit they weld together a colloquial variant of the standardized form of the adjective *sfânt/saint* (masculine) and *sântă/saint* (feminine) mostly accompanied by a PN. The basic formula of the type *sfântul/a* + PN, which uses the full form of the adjective, creates two-word hagionyms further be approached in the (b) section below. The most frequently used formula *Sân* + PN (< *sân* is the adulterated form of *sfânt*) shows its (a) gender-biased dialectal variants *Sânt* (*Sântandrei* < *Sânt,* masculine form of the adjective + Andrei, male PN) and *Sântă* for the feminine (*Sântămărie* < *Sântă,* feminine form of the adjective + Mărie, female PN), and its allophones *Sâm* (*Sâmpetru* < *Sâm*, masculine adjective + Petru, the Romanian version for Peter) and *Sum* (*Sumpetru* < *Sum*, masculine form of the adjective + Petru). The *–t* consonant in the Latin *sanctus* appears preserved when the masculine or feminine saint name begins with a vowel (*Sântimreu, Sântimbru, Sântana,* etc.). Nonetheless, exceptions to these categories have been identified in *Sâniacob* and *Sâniob*, which have lost it. The same *–t* consonant appears as both lost, in two regional variants of the same hagionym, i.e., *Sântandrei* used twice as the

oikonym of two villages in the north- and central-western Romanian departments[2] and preserved, in the variant *Sânandrei*, the name of a village in the south-western zone of Romania[3].

On the other hand, the PN component has its own peculiarities. Most frequently, it has preserved its standard Romanian form: *Sânmartin* (< Sân + *Martin*), *Sânpaul* (< Sân + *Paul*), *Sânsimion* (< Sân + *Simion*), *Sândominic* (< Sân + *Dominic*), *Sânpetru* (< Sân + *Petru*), etc. The few minor alterations of the PN in these lexical units reveal phonetic losses, such as the final consonant *–t* in *Sânbenedic* (< Sân + *Benedic**t***) or substitutions, for example, that of the final consonant *–v* in the standard form, substituted by *–b*, in *Sâniob* (< Sân + *Iov/ Job*).

The analysis of the corpus foregrounded the use of the same hagiotoponym in two or more (administrative) departments in Romania. Thus, *Sânsimion* can be spotted on the maps of the Harghita and Mureş; *Sântioana* is viewed on the maps of Cluj and Mureş and *Sânbotin* appears in the departments of Gorj and Vâlcea. *Sânpaul* and *Sâncrai* (< Sân + Crai) are mapped in three departments (the former in Cluj, Harghita and Mureş and the latter in Alba, Harghita and Hunedoara). At the same time, *Sâncraiu*, the variant of the latter, is used in two departments (Cluj and Covasna). *Sâncraiu*, the form ending in *–u* is reminiscent of the earlier version ending in *-ul*, the mark of the enclitic definite article for the masculine singular. *Sâncrăeni,* etymologically related to Sâncrai and Sâncraiu, is a descriptive, formed with*–eni*, the toponym-bound suffix "indicating the personal origin of the inhabitants that is of the descendants of the founder or the proprietor of the village" (Iordan 1963: 157). In other toponyms, such as *Fălticeni*, the suffix means either "people who come from" or "whose origin is in the village of Fălticei" (Iordan 1963: 159). The author mentions that the bound morphemes *-ian* (with its plural *–eni*) and *–escu* (with its plural form *–ieşti*) are operable with PN-derived toponyms. Indicative of the inhabitants' origin, these suffixes are slightly different. The etymon of the present-day *–ieni*, which is the Slavic form of the bound morpheme *–ěninŭ*, involves an association with "place". So, if I were to apply Iordan's distinction and interpret the meaning of the suffix *–eni* literally, it would mean that chronologically *Sâncrăeni* must have appeared after the establishment of the village of *Sâncrai*. *Sâncrăeni* must have come into being after some inhabitants of *Sâncrai* did decide that they should move to another place and so they did at some time, probably, for a very clear reason. The neighbouring villagers of the newly-established settlement must have referred to them as *Sâncrăeni*, i.e. "the people who once had lived in Sâncrai".

One-word hagionyms sometimes reflect a process of Romanianization or adaptation to the morpho-phonetic system of this language. Romanianization may appear a far-fetched word, but I am using it fully aware of its constructive analogy with other similar suffixations, such as Anglicization. These tendencies of the Romanianization process discussed in the foregoing only at the level of the *sanctus*, are noticeable at the level of the PN in these constructions. For example, *Sânmiclăuş*, the present-day name of a village in the department of Alba, was first attested with the Latin version of "Sanctus Nicolaus, then with the Magyar version of Szent Miklós. Its Romanian-naturalized forms are *Sânnicolau* and *Sânmiclăuş*" (Goicu 1999: 130, my emphasis). An etymological relationship between *Nicolau* and *Miklos* was identified

[2] Bihor and Hunedoara

[3] The department of Timiș

through the intermediary of the Houtzoul language, spoken by a population of apparently Ukrainian descent living in the north-eastern part of Romania, and who use the name of *na Mikolí* for the month of December (Vincenz 1970: 193).

The slightly altered hagionyms, which designate both important religious holidays and places, are quite common. For example, *Sânvăsâi* is described to have evolved from the hybrid pattern which associates *sanctus* (in its popular variant, *sân*) with the male name *Vasile*, derived from the Slavic name *Vasijo* (Goicu 1999: 116). To a native Romanian, an association between *Văsi(e)* or *Văsălie*, hypocoristic derivations of the standardized *Vasile*, would not be cryptic names. Suciu (1968: 136) tracks the roots of the twentieth-century *Sânvăsâi* to go back to the nineteenth-century *San Ladislău* (in 1854), then next to the sixteenth-century *Zent Lazlo* (in 1567) and even farther back to its earliest fourteenth-century specification in documents, under the name of the *sacerdos de Sancto Ladislao* (in 1332).

The same process of naturalization would be the source of such dramatic transformations of the hagionymic etymons which can hardly be identified in present-day toponyms. The toponyms *Săvădisla* and *Sânzieni* are the names of two villages whose history coincidentally goes back to the forteenth century. They sound so cryptic that it would be difficult to relate them to the name of a saint. The oikonym[4] *Săvădisla* is based on the Magyar name of *Láslo*, a hypocoristic of *Ladislau*, whose roots go back a long way to the Slavic name of *Vladislav*. The evolution of the Slavic *Sa(nkt) Wladisla(w)* is marked in the present-day Romanian form of Sfântul Valdislau, which was first reduced to *Sân Valdislau* and later to *Săv(l)ădisla* (Goicu 1999: 117).

Although not mentioned or maybe not discovered in chronicles yet, *Sânzieni* functions as an oikonym (D.E. 2006: 323). Etymologically, the "majority of the linguists consider this alteration to undoubtedly continue the name of *Sanctus Johannes*" (Goicu 1999: 121, my emphasis). For just one example, Constantinescu (1963: 82) indicates *Sfântul Ioan Botezătorul*/*Saint John the Baptist*, the Romanian translation of the Latin *Sanctus dies Ioanni*, to have ultimately been reduced to this form, which is both an oikonym and the name of a religious holiday celebrating this saint's birthday, which is known as St. John Day. Phonetically, *Sânzieni* currently appears as closely related to *Sânzăneşti, Sânzăneşti, Sîmzăneşti* and *Simzeneşti*, which are allophones of a village name in the department of Vaslui. They all seem to share the same etymon and bear the *–eşti* suffix, which is indicative of the origin in a person or a family name and not in a place. Regrettably, no details about the hagionymic nature of this toponym have been available.

Coroisânmartin, Ciucsângeorgiu, Streisângeorgiu and *Sântionlunca* are also assigned to one-word hagiotoponyms, although they reveal a three-element structure that makes them structurally different from the aforementioned linguistic pattern. In the first two cases, the hagionyms proper, *Martin Georgiu*, respectively, are preceded by the determining morphemes *Coroi*, *Ciuc* and *Strei*, which occur as independent morphemes in general toponymy. In everyday speech, *coroi* (the name of a breed of predatory birds), *ciuc* (a course cooked and eaten by shepherds) and *strei* (a breed of swine for the latter) are common nouns; in general toponymy, *Strei* is both a hydronym, referencing a rivulet in the Retezat Mountains and an oikonym, designating a village in the department of Hunedoara. *Santionlunca*, the last of these

[4] the name of a village in the department of Cluj

examples, consists of a common noun which is post posed to the hagionym. As an independent morpheme, it also has a double role, i.e., a common noun, *lunca*/*the hinterland*, and a commonym i.e., a village in the department of Vaslui.

Giurgiu, the etymologically cryptic name of a town in the south of Romania, would also give no hint at all to its hagionymic nature (it was actually omitted by Iordan), as a corruption of the name of *Sfântul Gheorghe*, the Romanian for *Saint George*. Pietro Visconte's map included in the earliest surviving European atlas of nautical charts[5], which was made in Venice and was functional between 1311-8, displays the toponyms with two mappings, i.e. *s(an)c(t) Georgi* to designate the present-day town of *Giurgiu* and a hydronym for the southern distributary of the Danube (Goicu 1999: 118). As an oikonym, it lost the adjectival particle of the etymon, which is an example of lexical ellipsis at the level of hagiotoponyms. The astionyms *Geoagiu* and *Gheorgheni* are names of towns, possibly rooted in the etymon Sfântul Gheorghe, but deprived of the determining element. The second type of lexical ellipsis is the toponym *Sfântul*, followed by no PN.

(b) Binomial hagionyms

These constructions, which appear to have migrated from religious calendars in their unadulterated forms, consist of two elements, i.e., the honorific and the name of saint, such as *Sfânta Ana* **[***sfântul/sfânta*] + [PN]. The Romanian gender-biased adjectives *sfântul/sfânta* hold the position of honorifics and are determiners for masculine and feminine PNs, respectively. They appear in five patterns circumscribed to general toponymy, each of them with a well-established toponymic role. Thus, while *Sfânta Elena*, *Sfântul Ilie* and (the semiformal binomial) *Sântă Măria* are exclusively oikonyms; *Sfânta Ana* is the name of an alpine lake in the Făgăraș Mountains, *Sfântu Gheorghe* is both an oikonym[6] and a hydronym[7].

(c) Hagionyms as determiners

Our research has recorded only two situations wherein the hagionym behaves as a determiner. Thus, *Sfântul Andrei/Saint Andrew* has become the only hagiotoponymic determiner in *Peştera Sfântul Andrei/Saint Andrew Cave*, a toponym, which celebrates the place for its having been the saint's shelter. The latter example is *Valea Sângeorgiului*, i.e., a complex formation whose hagionym is a one-word unit that is preceded by the name of a form of relief, *Valea*/*the valley*.

(d) Complex hagiotoponyms

Complex hagiotoponyms are composite forms resulting from the association of Sân-type juxtapositions with nouns, adjectives, genitival toponyms or ethnonyms.

The (a_1) **Sân-type juxtapositions** [Sân-including element + noun] are most often hyphened constructions. Scarcely represented, they occur in association with a common noun qualifying the hagionyms, such as: *Sângeorz-Băi* and *Sântimbru-Băi*. The second element is the Romanian word *baie*, initially meaning "bath", which is now more common as "spa", in its plural form *băi*, which has been recategorized into a proper noun. Following the same structure, the oikonym *Sântămăria-Orlea* consists of a hagionym and the seemingly proper noun *Orlea*. The etymology of this noun relates its origin to the Slavic noun *orl*, which means "eagle". The form *orlea*, which was originally the adjective expressing possession, meaning "of the eagle"

[5] https://www.facsimilefinder.com/facsimiles/portolan-atlas-pietro-vesconte (accessed on March 1, 2024)

[6] denotes a town situated in the department of Covasna and three villages, in the departments of Mureș, Ialomița and Tulcea, respectively

[7] for the southern distributary of the Danube into the Black Sea

(Constantinescu 1963: 339), was converted into a proper noun, revealing another instance of cryptic meaning in hagionymic toponymy.

The less conversant with etymologies would hardly ever imagine the real meaning of *Saint Mary of the Eagle*, an oikonym of special significance, when it is associated with what eagles usually symbolize in the Romanian folklore, i.e. heights, solitude, a bird's eye view, dominance, isolation, power, a keen eye, etc., that is both images and feelings or attitudes.

The (a_2) **Sân-type juxtapositions** rely upon contrary adjectives, such as: *big* vs. *small*, *old* vs. *new*, *upper* vs. *lower*. Iordan (1963: 191) considers that a formulaic representation of the subtype *PN+ adjective* usually pairs antonymic adjectives, in such examples as: *Osica Mare/Osica de Sus/ Big Osica* or *Upper Osica* vs. *Small Osica* or *Lower Osica*,. Nonetheless, Iordan (1963: 193) stresses that exceptions to these antonymic pairs do occur, more frequently with the *nou*/*new* vs. *vechi/old* pair-including toponyms. Thus, presently, although the opposite pair *Sânpetru Mare* and *Sânpetru Mic* does exist, *Sângeorzul Nou*, *Sânpetru Nou* and *Sânnicolau Mare* have no opposing pairs.

The less represented (b) **Sân-type juxtaposition** associates the hagionymic determinatum with a genitival toponym. Of the sum total of toponyms derived from names of saints, only the following four reflect this formula: *Sâncraiu Almaşului*, *Sânmihaiu Almaşului*, *Sânpetru Almaşului* and *Sâncraiu Silvaniei*. The toponymic element within these hagionyms, which is the carrier of the enclitic possessive article, appears in *Valea Sângeorgiului* and in the archaic genitival pattern of the hydronym *Lacu Enii* (*Ene's /Enea's lake*), where *Enii*, the genitival hypocoristic form of a personal name, was proven to originate from the name of *Sfântul Ioan*/*Saint John* (Constantinescu 1963: 51).

Table 1 which follows presents the (c) **Sân-type juxtapositions** wherein one-word saint names are associated with ethnonyms indicative of the regional minorities: *Unguresc*/*Hungarian* or *Maghiar*/ *Magyar*, *German*/*German* and *Sârbesc*/*Serbian.* Currently, only these compounds still exist:

Table 1. Two-word compound hagiotoponyms

Hagionyms	Ethnonym
Sânmărtinu	Maghiar
	Sîrbesc
Sânmihaiu	Român
	German
Sânpetru	German
Sânnicolau	Român
Sângeorzu	

Table 2 illustrates (d) **three-word hagiotoponymic formations** consisting of hagionym + preposition + noun, which further divide into those including common nouns used as proper nouns, i.e. *câmpie*/*plain*, *pădure*/*forest* and *piatra*/*stone*:

Table 2. Hagiotoponyms as determiners of common nouns

Hagionym	Preposition	Common nouns used as proper nouns
Sângeorgiu	de	Câmpie
Sânpetru		
Sânmartinu		

Sânmihaiu		
Sângeorgiu	de	Pădure
Sânmihai		
Sântămăria	de	Piatră

Considerably fewer are the examples described by the hydronym- and oikonym-including variants of this formula. The ensuing table presents these compounds built around the name of the Mureş River and two oikonyms:

Table 3. Hagiotoponyms as determiners of hydronyms

Hagionym	Preposition	Proper noun	
		Hydronym	Toponym
Sâncraiu	de	Mureş	
Sângeorgiu			
Sântana			
Sântioana			
Sângeorgiu	de		Meseş
Sânmartin			Beiuş
Sânnicolau			Beiuş

A unique hagiotoponym assigned to this group is *Fîntîna lu Sumpietru* (Moise 1994: 129), whose structure is different; its first element, *fîntîna/ fountain*, is a common noun followed by *lu* (instead of *lui*), the popular form for genitive masculine of the proclitic article and *Sumpietru*, one of the Transylvanian dialectal forms derived from the name of Sfântul Petru/*Saint Peter*.
The century-old continual process of transformation and/or adaptation, which has left an imprint on the existence of Romanian hagiotoponyms, is obvious both through their temporal and formal interpretations. In his survey of hagiotoponyms, Iordan (1963: 243) refers to a set of ten names that were functional in "Old Romania".

Table 4. Hagiotoponyms operable in Romanian toponymy until 1948

Hagiotoponym			
1.	Sfânta Vineri	6.	Sfântul Nicolae
2.	Sfântul Dumitru	7.	Gura Sfântului Petru
3.	Sfântul Gheorghe	8.	Sfântul Procopie
4.	Sfântul Gheorghe cel Nou	9.	Podul Sântămăriei
5.	Sfântul Ioan	10.	Copăceni-Sfântul Ioan

Iordan (1963: 24) listed the hagiotoponyms in use in the 1950's and early 1960's and his lists were used to ensure the comparative perspective underlying this approach.

4.2. Other features of hagiotoponyms

A comparative analysis of Iordan's and the currently-used hagiotoponyms brings to light both the hagiotoponyms which disappeared and those which appeared after 1963. Diachronically viewed, hagiotoponyms can divide into (a) strong oikonyms, which have come down to present-day usage, and (b) weak oikonyms, which have gone into oblivion either before 1948 or after 1963. It is true, after the 1948 reforms, which were (harshly) implemented by the communists during the 1950's in particular, a new administrative reform was imposed in 1968.

But this time, it could hardly exercise any dramatic impact upon hagiotoponyms, because the evil they could have faced had already been done long before this reform.

Orthographically viewed, a striking disparity is noticeable between Iordan's examples and the present-day hagionyms. This is due to the latest orthographic reform of the Romanian language in 2005 requiring the substitution of the former symbol *–î–* with the symbol *–â–* for the phoneme */ɨ/*, when it does not appear in a front or final position, which is the case with *sfânt/sfântă*. In addition, Iordan´s records refer to the standard form of the adjectives bearing their enclitic definite articles (*–ul* or *–a*) that appear to have been gradually lost. Ironically, the present-day "standard" forms are actually the oral versions of the 1960's.

Comparatively interpreted, the sum total of 93 hagiotoponyms in Iordan's inventory is higher than the total of the 85 currently used units. The modifications affecting the two lists show that:

(a) 59 hagiotoponyms passed the test of time as they appear in the two lists and hence, they have to be reckoned as strong formations;
(b) 32 units in Iordan's list, which roughly mean one third of their total number, have been lost; in other words, they stand for the category of weak hagiotoponyms;
(c) 26 new formations represent the gains recorded in the present-day inventory i.e., roughly half of the 59 inherited hagiotoponyms.

Of the 26 newly created units, the following selections illustrate three out of the four structural categories of hagiotoponyms, i.e., (a) – one-word hagiotoponyms: *Sânbotin* (in the department of Vâlcea), *Sâmbotin* (in the department of Gorj), *Sânandrei*, (b) – binomial formations: *Sânta Mare*, *Sfântu Ilie* and (c) – complex hagiotoponyms: *Valea Sângeorgiului.*

The percentage of their interference, which amounts to 63%, exceeds both the gains and losses and even if their orthography may appear different to foreigners, Romanian natives can identify the religious roots of these toponyms on account of their phonetical similarities. At the same time, each formation may require special attention as instances of paronymy (*Sîntion* vs. *Sîntiuan*) or allomorphisms (*Sîntion* vs. *Sântion*) might create confusion.

5. Conclusions

The linguistic references to hagiotoponymy in Romanian specialist literature have been either omissive or quite brief, marginal and merely illustrative. Sketchy and shallow as they were discovered to be, our references show that hagiotoponyms have had their times of glory and lengthy intervals of oblivion.

Formally, hagiotoponyms divide into one- and multi-word formations. Structurally, these formulaic typologies include:

(a) non-cryptic juxtapositions, i.e. those formations whose hagionyms has been preserved in its present-day standard form specified in religious calendars, such as: *Sântioana, Sântpaul,* etc.;
(b) semi-cryptic juxtapositions, namely those formations whose hagionyms sound (quite) similar to the standardized calendar name, such as: *Sânvăsii, Sângătâi,* etc.;
(c) cryptic juxtapositions, i.e. those formations whose hagionyms have been so altered that it is impossible to determine its etymon, such as: *Săvlădisla*;
(d) lexical ellipsis: *Giurgiu*, *Gheorgheni*, and *Georgieni*.

The multi-word formations cover the following formulaic representations:

(a) simple binomial hagiotoponyms, which function independently: *Sfântu Gheorghe,* etc.;
(b) simple binomial hagiotoponyms that function as determiners of other toponyms: *Sânmihaiu Almaşului,* etc.;
(c) complex hagiotoponyms, which further divide into:

(i) hagionyms + preposition + common noun.
(ii) hagionyms + preposition + hydronym.

All in all, this comparative approach reveals the following aspects:

(a) although before the 1989-turning point in the history of Romania the interest in the use of hagionyms was limited by the ideological circumstances and limiting background, a few mentions did consider this lexical category, albeit briefly;
(b) a diachronic view of hagiotoponyms pinpoints a distinction between the strong formations that have passed the test of time, and the weak ones which have not;
(c) the total number of strong and weak hagiotoponyms is higher in Iordan's findings (which amount to 103 such geographical names) than in the present-day corpus (which consists of 78 place and water names);
(d) a few pair-units seem to be allophones (e.g. *Sînicoară* and *Sînnicoară* or *Sîntiuan* and *Sîntion*, but while the former unit in each couple is not in use today, the latter occurs in both Iordan's list and the list which contains the units that have remained active to this day. On the other hand, *Sânbotin*, *Sânişor*, *Sânandrei* and *Sânmartin*, for example are pinned only in the list of newly created hagiotoponyms;
(e) the discarding of hagiotoponyms was considerably higher in Iordan's records; in addition to the losses noticeable in the comparative analysis (e.g. *Sîncraiul Deşert*, *Sînmărtiul Deşert, Sînlaslăul Niragiului*, *Sîngeorgiul Săsesc*, *Sînianăş, Sînliorinţ* and *Sîntăcătălina-Dorna*), another set of 32 formations in Iordan's list have no correspondent in the inventory of present-day units.

Both the inherited and newly created hagiotoponyms as well as the currently inoperable formations are part of the national treasure. As such, they deserve further research either from the perspective of their regional and cultural distribution or at the level of urbanisms. Although our comparative approach made a few remarks regarding their ups and downs in the local history of numerous Romanian towns, there is still much to be discovered.

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