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ANIMAL NAMES AND NICKNAMES IN MEDIEVAL TRANSYLVANIA UNTIL THE MID-14TH CENTURY: POSSIBILITIES AND OPINIONS

Abstract. In this study, we shall analyse the link between the symbolism conveyed by animals and anthroponyms; more precisely, we shall focus on the names of animals that were used to name or to nickname people in voivodal Transylvania and the contiguous counties, to the west and the north (Maramureş, Satu Mare, Bihor, Zarand, Arad, Cenad, Timiş and Caraş), until the mid-14th century. The sources from which we have extracted the names and nicknames analysed here are medieval documents that have been published by Romanian and Hungarian researchers.

To shed some light on the intricacies of animal symbolism, we shall turn to the meanings contained in myths, legends, bestiaries, folklore and fables, using, at the same time, the available information – very scanty, in general – about the bearers of animal names or nicknames, in order to capture, as clearly as possible, the above-mentioned connection between the man's inner and outer traits, his name/ nickname and the characteristics of the animal after which the individual in question was named.

Keywords. Transylvania, anthroponomy, nicknames, onomastic, Middle Ages, 12th - 14th centuries, sobriquet.

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Since prehistoric times, man has been in a close relationship with the environment in which he has lived. Animals and plants have been a source of inspiration for his everyday life. In time, the art produced by human groups and communities has abounded in decorative elements representing animals and plants, from the parietal paintings in various caves to the floral and animal motifs featured on the pottery of the Neolithic Period, or from the Roman reliefs figuring sacrifices to the Avars' objects and weapons adorned with beastly motifs.

Beginning with Late Antiquity and continuing throughout the medieval period, many Christian saints were presented in relationship with different domestic or wild animals. The Irish monk Columbanus (540-615), the Irish Bishop Moling (the 7th century), the hermit Walfard (the 12th century) and the Russian monk Sergius of Radonezh (the 14th century) loved and tamed animals, sometimes befriending them. The creatures they influenced belonged to different species: bears, wolves, donkeys, fish, flies, cats, and birds. The events illustrating the close link between saints and nature (animals) have survived until contemporary times or new ones have appeared, having as their protagonists hermits of the 19th and 20th centuries.²

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² Enzo Bianchi, Anne-Leatitia Michon, Pietro Chiaranz, *Oameni și animale. O perspectivă teologică și etică*, Oradea, Editura Ratio Et Revelatio, 2013, pp. 90-101.

This study is about the connection between the symbolism conveyed by animals and anthroponyms. More precisely, we focus on the names of animals that were used in the 12th-14th centuries to identify or to nickname people in voivodal Transylvania and the contiguous counties, to the west and the north (Maramureș, Satu Mare, Bihor, Zarand, Arad, Cenad, Timiș and Caraș – most of these areas lie today within the borders of Romania).

Ivan Evseev wrote the following about anthroponyms: “In the metatext of any culture, the category of proper names, which, at first glance, seem to be the most conventional linguistic signs, paradoxically turn into signs with a symbolical resonance.”³ The names of some animals, such as the *lion*, the *wolf*, the *fox* or the *ant*, have acquired symbolic meaning when they were introduced in myths and legends, where they possess a large number of attributes, as myth is seen as the birthplace of most symbols. Even if the same animals became characters in fables, their symbolism is not present there, because the focus is on a single attribute.⁴ Throughout this study, we will resort to the symbolism contained in the mythologies and legends of European and Asian populations in order to try to understand the – symbolical – reasons behind the granting of a particular animal name or sobriquet.

Alongside myths, legends, folklore and fables, bestiaries are of real help, as they can shed some light on the intricacies of animal symbolism. Bestiaries became popular in the Middle Ages, the period in which most of them appeared being the 12th-13th centuries. The first known bestiary, entitled *Physiologus*, was drafted in the 4th century, probably in Alexandria,⁵ and the first vernacular bestiary dates back to 1121, having been compiled by Philippe de Thaün.⁶ Bestiaries featured animals as images of good or evil, Christ or Satan, thus having the role of guidance with respect to the behaviour of humans towards various creatures.⁷

In the 16th century, in his treatise entitled *Livre des animaux et de l'excellence de l'homme*, Ambroise Paré presented the essential qualities of animals: the strength of the ox, the perfidy of the snake, the rage of the bull, the patience of the sheep, the cunning nature of the fox, the cruelty of the tiger, the pride of the toad, the stubbornness of the donkey, the gentleness of the dove, the sobriety of the chameleon, the cautiousness of the ant, the greed of the wolf, the loyalty of the dog, the infidelity of the mule, the prudence of the elephant, the docility of the barbet, the filthiness of the pig, the cleanliness of the squirrel, the scent of the civet, the stench of the goat, the

³ Ivan Evseev, *Cuvânt – simbol – mit*, Editura Facla, Timișoara, 1983, p. 26 (Infra: *Evseev 1983*).

⁴ *Evseev 1983*, pp. 28, 47.

⁵ Daniel Rafiini (University of Roma La Sapienza), *Human-Animal Relationship in Juan Josse Arreola's Bestiario*, p. 1, paper presented at the “Literature's Animals” Postgraduate Conference, Bristol University (18 May 2016), https://www.academia.edu/25621608/Human-Animal_Relationship_in_Juan_Josse_Arreola's_Bestiario (05.12.2016) (Infra: *Rafiini 2016*).

⁶ Rémy Cordonnier, „L'illustration du Bestiare (XIe-XIIIe siècle). Identité allégorique et allégorie identitaire,” in *L'allégorie dans l'art du Moyen Âge. Formes et fonctions. Héritages, créations, mutations*, Christian Heck (éd.), Brepols Publishers, 2011, pp. 157-170 (p. 163).

⁷ *Rafiini 2016*, p. 1.

timidity of the rabbit and the courage of the lion.⁸ It was those very essential characteristics, intrinsic ones, above all, that spawned the meanings of their symbols⁹ (beings, objects or phenomena).

In his *Fabulous Bestiary*, Jean-Paul Clébert wrote: “Closer to man than plants, animals have stood, since the beginning of time, at the basis of countless metamorphoses, avatars and divine tribulations. [...] Whether through the intercession of effigies, masks, animal taboos, totems or legendary metamorphoses, man has always resorted to animals to express himself, to communicate with others, as well as with himself.”¹⁰ Drawing inspiration from *Le Grand dictionnaire de la Bible*, by Richard Simon, published in Lyon in 1717, the above-mentioned author gave a list of each of the two types of animals people have included in myths and legends or depicted on coats of arms: pure and impure.¹¹

Based on the lists drawn up by Jean-Paul Clébert, we have classified the animals used for designating and nicknaming people in Transylvania and the adjoining counties in the 12th-14th centuries. Thus, among the pure creatures there were: the sheep / the lamb (Agnna / Juh), the insect (Bogar / Bugar), the bull / cow / calf (Bicca / Byka, Vacca, Buriw; Clébert does not mention the bull, but the ox, the cow and the calf, that is, the ones with cloven hooves, are considered pure animals), the rooster / the hen (Gallus / Tyuk), the blackbird (Rigou).

Among the impure animals we can include: the bear (Ber / Medve / Ursus), the horse / the foal (Chikou / Cyko), the dog / the bitch (Cute / Suka), the wolf (Forkos / Farkas / Vilka), the pig / the sow (Porcan), the raven (Voryu) and the falcon (Solum / Solyam / Solym).

The crayfish (Raak / Roac) does not appear in the lists drawn up by Clébert.

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After we have seen, generally speaking, the importance of animal creatures in man's spiritual and material existence, we will try to discover the meaning of each

⁸ Jean-Paul Clébert, *Bestiar fabulos. Dicționar de simboluri animaliere*, București, Artemis – Cavallioti, 1995, p. 12 (Infra: Clébert 1995).

⁹ *Evseev 1983*, p. 67.

¹⁰ *Clébert 1995*, p. 6.

¹¹ Pure animals: the ox, the cow, the calf, the sheep, the lamb, the she-goat, the he-goat, the stag, the antelope, the wild goat, the buffalo, the deer, the spear-horned antelope (oryx), the giraffe, the grasshopper, the pigeon, passerines, the quail, the lark, the rooster, the capon, the hen, the pheasant, the grouse, the thrush, the ortolan, the partridge, the woodcock, the turtle dove, the bee, the bumble bee, cantharides, the stag beetle, the mosquito, the wasp, the fly, the botfly, the butterfly, the midge, the ant, the spider, the moth, the scorpion, the frog, the whale, and the sperm whale.

Impure animals: the camel, the rabbit, the hare, the weasel, the mouse, the crocodile, the forest gerbil, the chameleon, the green lizard, the lizard, the mole, the horse, the donkey, the dog, the mule, the elephant, the lion, the leopard, the tiger, the lynx, the panther, the bear, the wolf, the hyena, the fox, the wild donkey, the unicorn, the rhinoceros, the boar, the monkey, the porcupine, the frog, the toad, the fly, the scorpion, the eagle, the falcon, the griffin, the kite, the raven, the ostrich, the owl, the parrot, the hawk, the loon, the ibis, the stork, the bittern, the heron, the hoopoe, the bat, the sea eagle, the ixion, the harrier, the magpie, the little owl; cf. *Clébert 1995*, p. 11.

animal in the life of the one who was named or nicknamed after it.¹² This is not a simple approach, because we lack detailed information about the persons in question. Thus, the conclusions we will reach are not going to be definitive, but rather will provide an impetus for further studying the role of animal names and nicknames (or other types thereof) in the medieval society of Transylvania and elsewhere.

The **sheep** (Agnna / Iuh). Here we have included the onomastic elements Agnna (in Latin: *agnna* = lamb) and Juh (in Hungarian: *juh* = sheep). These referred to a woman and a man. The former name appears in the document as a unique name,¹³ whereas the second onomastic element serves as a nickname: Nicolaus dictus Juh (Nicolae yclept Iuh).¹⁴ Agnna was a maid, a serf devoted to the church in Vgra / Ugra (Bihar County), while Nicolae yclept Iuh was a comes, a noble man.

Over time, the lamb has been a symbol of innocence and meekness; the biblical prophets associated it with God incarnate in man, and Christ was later seen as the lamb who sacrificed itself for mankind.¹⁵ In the fable “The Wolf and the Lamb” by Jean de la Fontaine, the latter is presented as the gentle character that intends to avoid the conflict with the cantankerous wolf (aiming to appease his hunger by devouring the lamb), defending its innocence at the same time.¹⁶ The sheep, like the goat, was considered a beneficent, sacral animal – a trait that also stemmed from its economic importance; due to their utility, sheep were “enchanted,” “wondrous,” “fertile,” “clean,” bringers of peace, plenty and fruitfulness.¹⁷

As regards Agnna, she could very well have been a docile and innocent person, used to showing obedience to her masters, which may have attracted this name. As for Comes Nicolae yclept Iuh, we can assume that it was a character trait (kindness, purity of soul), or an event involving sheep that led to his nickname Iuh (sheep), or his “gift” of ensuring the well-being of his kin or of the leaders in his county or voivodeship.

¹² For the significance of the names / nicknames in the languages in which they are listed in the documents, we have used the following dictionaries: W. Meyer-Lübke, *Romanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg, 1911; Rich Derksen, *Etymological Dictionary of the Slavic Inherited Lexicon*, Brill, Leiden-Boston, 2008; Zaicz Gábor, *Etimológiai szótár. Magyar szavak és toldalékok eredete*, Budapest, Tinta Könyvkiadó, 2006; Szili Péter, Csillag Imre, *Dicționar român-maghiar, maghiar-român*, fifth edition, Constanța, Editura Steaua Nordului, 2012; Gheorghe Guțu, *Dicționar latin-român*, revised edition, București, Editura Humanitas, 2007; Carmen Colceriu, *Dicționar german-român*, București, Editura Corint, 2008.

¹³ Johannis Karácsonyi, Samuelis Borovszky, *Regestrum Varadinense. Examini ferri candentis*, Budapest, 1903, no. 389, p. 307 (Infra: *Regestrum Varadinense*); *Documente privind Istoria României*, Veacul XI, XII și XIII, C. Transilvania, Vol. I (1075-1250), București, Editura Academiei Române, 1951, no. 67/389, p. 147 (Infra: *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*).

¹⁴ *Codex diplomaticus comitum Zichy / A gróf Zichy-család okmánytára*, I, Pest, 1871, no. 142, p. 122 (Infra: *Zichy, I*); I. Karácsonyi, *A hamis, hibás keltii és heltezetlen oklevelek jegyzéke 1400-ig*, Budapest, 1902, no. 279, p. 138 (for the correct dating); *DIR.C.XIV/1*, no. 124, p. 176.

¹⁵ *Clébert 1995*, pp. 194-196; Mihai Coman, *Bestiar mitologic românesc*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1996, p. 21 (Infra: *Coman 1996*).

¹⁶ Jean de la Fontaine, *Fabule*, Mircea Rusenescu (ed.), Trans. Hrista Georgescu, București, Editura Poseidon, 2012, p. 7 (Infra: *La Fontaine*).

¹⁷ Mihai Coman, *Mitologie populară românească*, Vol. I, București, Ed. Minerva, 1986, pp. 26-27 (Infra: *Coman 1986*); *Coman 1996*, pp. 21-29.

The **bear** (Ber / Medve / Ursus). In the documents we have noticed the existence of three men who had this name: Ber,¹⁸ Medue¹⁹ and Ursus.²⁰ The anthroponym in this case is also of Germanic (*bär / bjoern*), Hungarian or Slavic extraction (*medve*) and there is also one of Latin or Romanian origin (*ursus* or *ursu*).²¹ The first two men with the name of the bear were mentioned in 1214, in the case law files of the *Registry of Oradea*. The only thing we know about Ber is that he was a German. Medue lived in the village of Gyan in Bihor County (on the territory of Hungary today), he was a man of the citadel and probably of Walloon ethnicity, as Walloon colonists had been brought in the three settlements called Gyan.²² Ursus was a Romanian knez from Olahfalu, located in Szeklerland, and he was mentioned in the first year of the 14th century. Although the document was reproduced in various editions, it seems that it was a forged one from the first half of the 19th century,²³ which means that we can no longer know for sure whether the name / nickname Ursus existed at the beginning of the 14th century in this area.

In bestiaries the bear occupied a very important place. Folklore also abounded in images of this animal. Christianity knows no less than eight saints bearing the name of the great carnivorous beast, Ursus / Ours. The bear was seen both as a protector or guardian and as a devourer, sometimes being associated with fertility rituals. In folklore it was also considered a healer: in Central and Eastern Europe, bears were given the name Martin. In some regions, the Feast of Saint Martin was celebrated (on 1 February and 11 November), dedicated to the god Mars. At those times, the sick were gathered together in one place, being trampled underfoot by tamed bears. The bear was most likely the wild beast that was closest to man. Myths actually spoke about the bear being descended from a man.²⁴ And, of course, we must not forget the actual characteristics of this wild animal: force, impetuosity and aggressiveness,²⁵ its rather antisocial nature,²⁶ its size, or its hunting and fishing skills. In the fable “The Bear and The Two Friends,” two sides of the carnivorous beast are

¹⁸ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 69, pp. 178-179; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/69, p. 58.

¹⁹ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 97, pp. 187-189; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/97, p. 65.

²⁰ Szabó Károly, *Sékely oklevéltár*, vol. I (1211-1519), Kolozsvár, 1872, no. XXII, pp. 29-32 (Infra: *Sékely oklevéltár*, I); Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, Nicolae Densușianu, *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor, 1199-1345*, Volume I, Part 1, București, 1887, no. CCCCXLII, pp. 553-554 (Infra: *Hurmuzaki, Densușianu, I/1*); Antonius Fekete Nagy, Ladislaus Makkai, *Documenta historiam Valachorum in Hungaria illustrantia, usque ad annum 1400 p. Christum*, Études sur l'Europe Centre-Orientale, 29, Budapest, 1941, no. 26, pp. 45-46; Jakó Zsigmond, *Codex diplomaticus Transsylvaniae. Diplomata, epistolae et alia instrumenta litteraria res Transsylvania illustrantia / Erdélyi Okmánytár. Oklevelek, levelek és más írásos emlékek Erdély történetéhez*, II (1301-1339), Magyar Országos Levéltár, Budapest, 2004, no. 6, p. 36 (Infra: *EO*, II).

²¹ *Sékely oklevéltár*, I, p. 29, note 2.

²² *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, p. 65, note 2.

²³ *EO*, II, no. 6, p. 36.

²⁴ *Evseev 1983*, pp. 108-109; *Coman 1986*, pp. 174-183; *Clébert 1995*, pp. 318-319; *Coman 1996*, pp. 142-146.

²⁵ *Evseev 1983*, p. 107.

²⁶ Viorica Goicu, *Contribuții la onomastica istorică*, Timișoara, Editura Augusta, 2001, p. 81 (Infra: *Goicu 2001*).

presented: its terrifying nature, due to its ferociousness and sheer strength, and its gullible character.²⁷

Retaining these attributes of the bear and taking into account the limited information we have about Ber and Medue, it is not easy to understand the motivation behind those two names. We know that Medue was a man of the citadel, in the sense that he was a person in charge of the defence and maintenance of the fortification, who also performed various jobs in its service.²⁸ If we look at the situation from this angle, the following characteristics of the bear are relevant: strength, stamina, a hunting instinct.

In the case of Ber, we believe that an important element was the name of his son, Furman.²⁹ This anthroponym could refer to a fur hunter or a hirsute man, whose abundant hair looked like fur. In the case of the former explanation, the name Ber might have had the same source, namely the occupation of the person who was named thus was hunting, and the name was intended to ensure his success through the characteristics of the wild animal: hunting skills, strength, resilience, and fearlessness. The fact that in Bihor County, for example, there were settlements whose inhabitants owed animal furs to the king - as they did in the village of Saris, where the hunters of the fortress of Bihor resided³⁰ - suggests that it is very likely that Ber was a hunter and his name expressed this. On the other hand, if he was not a hunter, Ber may have been a man with an imposing build, strong like a bear.

The **insect**: in the case of three individuals we have identified the nickname Bagar / Bogar / Bugar (in Hungarian: *bogár* = bug, insect): Johannes dictus Bagar, Stephanus dictus Bagar (in 1329; it is possible that John and Steven were brothers)³¹ and Stephanus dictus Bogar / Bugar (mentioned between the years 1320-1341).³² All three of them were of noble birth, the first two being liegemen of Toma, Voivode of Transylvania, while the other, Ștefan yclept Bogar / Bugar, was the „king’s man” (a representative of the king).

In fables the best-known types of insects / bugs are: the ant and the grasshopper. In one of the most popular fables, “The Grasshopper and the Ant,” the former is a carefree and irresponsible partier, while the ant is diligent and provident.³³

²⁷ *La Fontaine*, pp. 83-84.

²⁸ Simonis de Keza, *Chronicon Hungaricum / Cronica Ungurilor*, Appendix, Chap. II, in G. Popa-Lisseanu, *Izvoarele Istoriei Românilor*, vol. IV, București, 1935 (Infra: *Chronicon Hungaricum*); Ștefan Pascu, *Voievodatul Transilvaniei*, vol. I, Cluj, Editura Dacia, 1971, p. 313 (Infra: *Pascu 1971*).

²⁹ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 69, pp. 178-179; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/69, p. 58.

³⁰ Imre Szentpétery, *Regesta regum stirpis Arpadianae critico-diplomatica / Az Árpádházi királyok okleveleinek kritikai jegyzéke*, I Kötet, (1001-1270), I Füzet, Budapest, 1923, no. 202, pp. 61-66 (Infra: *Szentpétery*, I/1); *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 41, pp. 23-27, the Latin text on pp. 363-367.

³¹ DL 277263; *Documente privind Istoria României*, C. Transilvania, Veacul XIV, Vol. II (1321-1330), București, Editura Academiei R.P.R., 1953, no. 556, pp. 296-297, 401-402 (Infra: *DIR.C.XIV/2*).

³² DL 76328 (1323-11-23); *Zichy*, I, no. 209, p. 181; no. 210, p. 182; no. 214, p. 186; no. 215, pp. 186-187; no. 217, pp. 187-188; no. 236, pp. 203-205; *DIR.C.XIV/1*, no. 415, p. 353; no. 416, p. 354; no. 440, p. 370; no. 452, p. 373; *DIR.C.XIV/2*, no. 57, p. 22; no. 212, p. 96; *Documente privind istoria României*, C. Transilvania, Veacul: XIV, vol. IV (1341-1350), Editura Academiei Române, 1955, no. 33, pp. 28-31 (Infra: *DIR.C.XIV/4*).

³³ *La Fontaine*, pp. 4-5.

Unfortunately, regarding the individuals nicknamed Bagar / Bogar in medieval Transylvania, there is no indication of the specific type of insect to which reference was made and we do not have enough information to be sure that the term Bagar / Bogar had the meaning of bug / insect. Therefore, we shall limit ourselves to suggesting the possibility that Bagar / Bogar were animal nicknames.

The **bull / cow / calf** (Bicca / Byka, Buur, Boriw, Vaca). The only person with the nickname Boriw / the Calf we have come across was the noble Nicolae yclept Boriw of Geoagiu (*Nicolaus dictus Boriw de Gyog*),³⁴ and there was also only one man with the name Vaca.³⁵ Bicca / Byka (in Hungarian: *bika* = bull) was present as a sobriquet in the case of two people: in the first case, under a simple form (maybe even as a unique name, Bicca),³⁶ while in the second case, in a compound form (*Blasius dictus bykanyakw* – Blasius yclept Bykanyakw / Bull's Neck).³⁷ Bicca was a *castrens* mentioned in documents in 1227, and Blasius yclept Bykanyaku may have been a townsman (1341). The last person that had this nickname was Marcell Buur, a noble from the county of Zarand, mentioned in 1347.³⁸

Very much is known about the bull or, more precisely, about the aurochs, not only from bestiaries, but especially from mythology and ancient religions. In the Danube Valley, this animal had been worshipped since the Neolithic. The aurochs represented virility, the principle of procreation, as it was the companion of the goddess of fertility. The bull / aurochs was worshipped from India to Western Europe, or from Egypt to the northern parts of our continent. In addition to its attributes concerning fecundity, the bull was also seen as a positive, familiar spirit, which could defend man against demons. The Celts considered the bull a royal beast, representing unvanquished greatness. Hunting the aurochs, much like hunting the stag, was a rite of passage and initiation for the youth.³⁹ The Celts associated it with ferocity, but also with the abundance of crops.⁴⁰ In the fable of Jean de la Fontaine entitled "The Frog and the Bull," the latter was admired for its stoutness.⁴¹ The main attributes that man has admired in this animal, from prehistory to modernity, are physical strength, impetuosity and aggressiveness.⁴² To take revenge on the

³⁴ Franz Zimmermann, Carl Werner, *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, Band I (1191-1342), Hermannstadt, 1892, no. 519, pp. 471-472 (Infra: UB, I); *Documente privind istoria României*, C. Transilvania, Veacul: XIV, vol. III (1331-1340), Editura Academiei Române, 1954, no. 272, pp. 367-368.

³⁵ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 161, pp. 210-211; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/161, p. 81.

³⁶ *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 187, p. 230.

³⁷ DL 3408; Georgius Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*, VIII/4, Buda, 1832, no. CCLXVIII, pp. 517-518; *DIR.C.XIV/4*, no. 49, pp. 41-42; Ferenc Sebök, *Anjou-kori oklevéltár (1341)*, XXV, Budapest-Szeged, 2004 (Infra: *Anjou*, XXV), no. 533, p. 250.

³⁸ Karácsonyi János, „Oklevélkivonatok a Szentmiklósi és Óvári gróf Pongrácz család levéltárából,” in *Történelmi Tár*, 1896, pp. 505-528 (p. 508) (Infra: *Karácsonyi 1896*); *DIR.C.XIV/4*, no. 590, p. 411; *Anjou*, XXXI, no. 1075, pp. 542-543.

³⁹ *Coman 1986*, pp. 5-14; *Clébert 1995*, p. 318; *Coman 1996*, pp. 29-36.

⁴⁰ Patricia Monaghan, *The Encyclopedia of Celtic Mythology and Folklore*, New York, Facts On File, Inc., 2004, pp. 64-65 (Infra: *Celtic Mythology*).

⁴¹ *La Fontaine*, p. 7.

⁴² *Evseev 1983*, p. 107.

Babylonian hero Gilgamesh, after he rejected her advances, the goddess Inanna sent the giant Bull of Heaven, but Gilgamesh killed it.⁴³ With regard to the quality of a royal animal, we should mention the legend of the founding of Moldavia, whose central theme was the tracking down and hunting of an aurochs. Subsequently, in the country's coat of arms, the aurochs was symbolizing the power.

In its turn, the cow played an important religious and mythological role. In addition to the attributes listed for the bull, the cow also had the attribute of fertility, given its plentiful nourishing liquid – milk. The animal is important for Christians, Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists alike. The cow gives life and food, but also enlightenment (in India). The Greeks saw it as the avatar of several deities. The cow had the same role of a primordial animal, the giver of food, among the populations of Northern Europe. In many legends, the heroes stole a cow (or another longhorn: ox, bull), the ritualistic nature of the theft being more important than the economic one; thus, the damaged party was wrested of power, force, and capital.⁴⁴

From the point of view of profane attributes, the calf can be said to represent the principle of mildness and innocence, while the bull / aurochs is a strong animal, difficult to subdue and defeat. Unfortunately, we have no additional information about Nicolae yclept Boriv to suggest that this nickname was assigned to him due to his gentle, quiet nature. Then again, we cannot rule out this possibility.

As regards the two men named and nicknamed Bicca / Bull and Bykanyaku / Bull's Neck, we need to think about those very profane qualities, pertaining to the strength of the animal. We know that Bicca was a *castrens*, in the sense that he was one of the people in charge with the maintenance of royal fortresses, who protected them and fulfilled various other jobs in those fortifications.⁴⁵ It is very possible that Bicca was a very powerful man, which made him worthy of this name or sobriquet. The nickname Bykanyaku / Bull's Neck suggests the same motivation for granting it, namely the strength and robustness that characterised the man in question. If Buur – the bearer of this nickname was a certain Marcell, a Romanian perhaps – meant *bour*, aurochs, then it is likely that the intention behind this nickname was the same as in the case of Bicca and Bykanyaku.

In the case of Vaca, we must also take account of another possibility, namely that the onomastic element was a misspelling of the term *vaco*, which meant *free man*, a *man without a master*.⁴⁶ If, however, it was about the Latin *vacca* (cow), then it is possible that some of the qualities of that man had determined the ascription of this name or sobriquet, such as, for example, holding a piece of fertile land with the help of which he provided nourishment to his family and ensured their subsistence / survival.

The **horse / foal** (Chikou, Cyko; in Hungarian: *csikó* = foal). We have detected two people with the name Chikou and one called Cyko. We have used the

⁴³ Gwendolyn Leick, *Dicționar de mitologie a Orientului Apropiat antic*, București, Editura Artemis, 2005, p. 88.

⁴⁴ Coman 1986, pp. 1-5; Clébert 1995, pp. 324-326; Coman 1996, pp. 29-36.

⁴⁵ *Chronicon Hungaricum*, Appendix, Cap. II, 3; Pascu 1971, p. 313.

⁴⁶ G. Guțu, *Dicționar latin-român*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983, pp. 1274-1275.

term name and not nickname, because they were not sobriquets, but unique names. The two Chikous were mentioned in the documents in 1213⁴⁷ and 1216. Only in the second case was the village from which the individual came also specified: Sari, in Bihar County (Șauaieiu, Bihar County).⁴⁸ We believe, however, that in both situations the person might have been the same, in the sense that there was only one individual with the name of Chikou. Cyko was a nobleman, mentioned one century after Chikou, in 1318.⁴⁹

The horse was considered a sacred animal in most ancient religions, its name (*hippo*) being associated with the name of many gods: Poseidon, Demeter, Artemis, etc. The horse was perceived as ambivalent: pure and impure, solar and funeral, Uranian and Chthonian, the harbinger of happiness and the foreteller of death; horses were associated with justiciary forces and conquering ventures. Also, the horse was a clairvoyant, sensing and seeing what his master failed to and, therefore, guiding and helping him. The four-legged beast could also be seen as an enemy of man, much like the cat. In medieval Europe it was believed that the dead metamorphosed themselves into horses. The burial of the animal together with its master or with an object belonging to him, a practice encountered from China to the West of Europe, ensured the master's journey into the underworld. The horse was also associated with heroic youth, with male and female virginity. Finally, the horse was also a symbol of eroticism, highlighted in myths about abductions or rapes.⁵⁰

For the Celts, the horse was extremely important both symbolically / religiously and practically, even the goddess Epona bearing the name of this animal.⁵¹ In La Fontaine's fables, the horse / roan is vindictive, for which it pays with its own freedom. It is also intelligent, realising when someone is preparing to do him any harm.⁵² However, the main and best-known attributes of the horse remain: its physical beauty, strength, impetuosity, speed, intelligence, devotion and sharp senses.⁵³

As regards the individuals named or nicknamed after the horse, the situation is somewhat more complicated by the fact that each bore the name of the foal and not of the grown-up horse, which had the characteristics stated above. The young horse, the colt, could indicate youth and a playful, restive, wild nature. But persons who were called so were not necessarily young. We know that Cyko was the father of Comes Petru, the latter being deceased at the time of issuance of the document in which they were mentioned.⁵⁴ If we exclude youth from the equation, perhaps those

⁴⁷ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 28, p. 164; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/28, p. 48.

⁴⁸ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 159, pp. 209-210; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/159, p. 80.

⁴⁹ Varjú Elemér, *Oklevéltár a Tomaj nemzetségbeli Losonczi Bánffy család történetéhez*, Vol. I (1214-1457), Budapest, 1908, no. XLIV, pp. 43-44 (Infra: *Bánffy*, I); *DIR.C.XIV/1*, no. 331, pp. 303-304.

⁵⁰ *Coman 1986*, pp. 35-51; *Clébert 1995*, pp. 49-55; *Coman 1996*, pp. 47-56.

⁵¹ *Celtic Mythology*, p. 249.

⁵² The fables in question are „The Horse and the Stag” and „The Roan and the Wolf,” cf. *La Fontaine*, pp. 71-72, respectively pp. 74-75.

⁵³ *Evseev 1983*, pp. 67-68.

⁵⁴ *Bánffy*, I, no. XLIV, pp. 43-44; *DIR.C.XIV/1*, no. 331, pp. 303-304.

named Chikou / Cyko had an impetuous, restive nature, like a colt, which led to this name or nickname being granted to them.

The **dog** (Cute; in Hungarian: *kutya* = dog). The dog was “responsible” for three animal names in medieval Transylvania that have come down to us. One of them was Cute, a serf of the fortress of Turda (1268),⁵⁵ but we have also included here two other individuals called Suka (1215)⁵⁶ and Syka (1292),⁵⁷ whose names could refer to the bitch (*szuka* in the Hungarian language; it had the same form in some Slavic languages, more precisely in Polish – *suka*).⁵⁸ The occupation of the last two individuals is not apparent from the documents.

Until the Middle Ages, the image of the dog was not too good in Europe. In ancient mythologies, particularly for the Greeks (Cerberus), the Egyptians (Anubis) and the Hindus, the dog was the guardian of the passage to the underworld, but after man’s death, the dog would become his guide and protector, its psychopompous role manifesting thus. Later the animal was pictured as a companion of man, being characterised by loyalty and devotion. The greyhound was most frequently present in heraldry. It was seen as an animal to the liking of God, who prayed for its master, and, of course, as the keeper of the house by excellence.⁵⁹

Even if in some cultures the image of the dog improved at a later time, among the Celts the animal was more positively regarded. It was associated with fertility and abundance, being also perceived as a healer, taking account of the fact that it accompanied Sirona, the goddess of healing for the Celts on the continent. Of course, it was also associated with death and the underworld, but the situations in which the dog accompanied various warrior heroes were more numerous.⁶⁰ The fable “The Wolf and the Dog” captures it in the posture of an animal that is deeply attached to its master, to the extent that it has given up its own freedom (sometimes being tethered), true, for a better life than that of the wild beasts of the forest.⁶¹

As a serf of the fortress, Cute was under the obligation to maintain and defend the whole defensive ensemble in Turda, but also to participate in military exploits when the sovereign demanded him to.⁶² We cannot exclude the possibility that because he was a man with military duties, his name / nickname expressed his loyalty to the fortress and / or to its commander. With regard to the two men named Suka and Syka, personal information is lacking almost entirely, so we can only assume the existence of a trait that was also characteristic of the dog.

⁵⁵ *Documente privind Istoria României*, C. Transilvania, vol. II (1251-1300), București, Editura Academiei Române, 1952, no. 90, p. 99 (Infra: *DIR.C.XIII/2*).

⁵⁶ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 130, p. 200; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/130, p. 73.

⁵⁷ *DIR.C.XIII/2*, no. 423, pp. 383-384.

⁵⁸ Anda Mareș, Nicolae Mareș, *Dicționar polon român*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980, p. 352.

⁵⁹ *Coman 1986*, pp. 59-67; *Clébert 1995*, pp. 76-77; *Coman 1996*, pp. 66-72.

⁶⁰ *Celtic Mythology*, p. 132.

⁶¹ *La Fontaine*, pp. 8-9.

⁶² B. Halász Éva, „A körösi várjobbágyok a 13-15 században”, în *Középkortörténeti tanulmányok*, 7, Szeged, 2012, pp. 313-323 (p. 314).

The **wolf** (Farkas / Forkos, Vilc).⁶³ The term wolf was used as a nickname and as a unique name by very many people in the 12th-14th centuries (over 40 individuals, the majority in the first half of the 13th century). Alongside Gall, it was the most commonly used animal-related unique name. I will not go into details here, because I did so on another occasion,⁶⁴ but it should be noted that the people named Farkas / Forkos / Farcasius / Forcasius and Wilk / Vilc belonged to any of the following social categories: nobles, clergy, non-noble freemen (royal serfs, peasants, possibly German „guests”) and dependent people (servants, *udvornici*).⁶⁵ At European level, *Lupus* occurred frequently as a cognomen in ancient Roman inscriptions. Later on in time, 15 Christian bishops bore this name. Some of the anthroponyms *Lupo* from the Roman / Latin environments were translations of the Germanic name *Wulfo*.⁶⁶

The wolf was present in religion, mythology and bestiaries in various shapes and forms, albeit on two main levels: the negative one, in which the focus was on the carnivorous beast’s violence, malice and destructive nature, and the positive one, when the animal’s superior skills were emphasised, such as its speed and force, its excellent sight and hearing, its attributes as a guide and initiator, as well as its hunting spirit.⁶⁷ In their turn, La Fontaine’s numerous fables feature the wolf as the protagonist, in the following main hypostases: independence, freedom, pursuing its own path; violence; hunger, gourmand appetite, rapaciousness, which leads him to be fooled sometimes; unfairness, treacherousness; craftiness; deceitfulness; “a shepherd among the sheep”; ungratefulness.⁶⁸

As I pointed out in the article “Povestea unui nume: antroponimul Farkas (Lupu) în Transilvania veacului al XIII-lea. Posibilități și opinii,” the name / nickname *Lupu* could be used for several reasons. For each of these we have identified a – more or less clear – corresponding example among the individuals on the territory examined here: keeper of knowledge, warrior and initiator, hunter, guide, and / or messenger, foreign „guest” / stranger, deceitful / lying / cunning or unfriendly / grumpy man, wizard, healer, gourmand / famished man.⁶⁹

The **rooster / hen** (Gall – in Latin: *gallus* = rooster; *Tyuk* – in Hungarian: *tyuk* = hen): in the 12th-14th centuries, the name Gall / Gallus was fairly common in Transylvania and the adjoining counties, being encountered in the case of about 40

⁶³ The equivalent term for the wolf in Old Slavonic was *vlk*, in Bulgarian *vlko*, and in Serbo-Croatian *vuk*, cf. *Goicu 2001*, p. 118.

⁶⁴ Victor V. Vizauer, „Povestea unui nume: antroponimul Farkas (Lupu) în Transilvania veacului al XIII-lea. Posibilități și opinii,” in *Acta Musei Maramorosiensis*, XI, 2015, pp. 24-41 (Infra: *Vizauer 2015*).

⁶⁵ *Vizauer 2015*, pp. 26-27.

⁶⁶ *Goicu 2001*, p. 83-87; P. Caraman, „L’héritage romain dans l’anthroponymie roumaine,” in *Actele celui de-al XII-lea congres internațional de lingvistică și filologie romanică*, București, Editura Academiei R.S.R., 1970, pp. 1107-1113.

⁶⁷ *Coman 1986*, pp. 158-159; *Clébert 1995*, pp. 175-180; *Coman 1996*, pp. 181-187.

⁶⁸ *La Fontaine*, pp. 8-9, 16-17, 25, 47, 52-53, 54-55, 74-75, 122-124.

⁶⁹ *Vizauer 2015*, pp. 30-38.

individuals.⁷⁰ It is possible that we should not have taken into account the nickname Tyuk of the noble Thomas, bailiff of the royal court, mentioned in 1347,⁷¹ due to the high probability that its bearer was not originally from Transylvania or the adjoining counties.

The rooster is the one that announces the end of the night and the beginning of the day. It is the symbol of vigilance and resurrection (the immortality of the soul). The rooster is present among Christians, for whom the fact that it crowed three times during the Passion of Christ has a particular significance; among Muslims, who believe that a giant rooster will wake the dead at the Last Judgment; and also among the ancient Scandinavians, who thought that a red rooster would announce the end of the world. In the 13th century, especially in France, the rooster began to be depicted on a metal rod affixed to the crosses of belfries, suggesting the symbol of vigilance and that of the sermon (this bird was an attribute of the preacher, who “awakened” people to faith and the Divine). The rooster was a wise advisor, but also a bold creature, the French calling it *Coq hardi*. In heraldry, it retains the attribute of vigilance, adding to it the one of pride: it is represented with the body positioned sideways, with its head held high.⁷² In fables, the cock is shown as being both smart and naive or ignorant.⁷³

By contrast, the hen has different connotations from the rooster. In bestiaries it is presented under two forms: the hen that lays golden eggs and the black hen; the former is always white and symbolises fecundity; the black hen is related to witches, who sacrifice it at midnight at a crossroads to summon a demon.⁷⁴ This bird shows all the functions of a psychopompous animal, the hen playing an important role in rites of passage.⁷⁵ The title of one of La Fontaine’s allegorical stories, “The Hen That Laid the Golden Eggs,” expresses the themes of fecundity, of prosperity, but here it illustrates the master’s lack of patience on his path towards securing the riches whose source is the hen itself.⁷⁶ In fact, the hen was a symbol of abundance among several Indo-European peoples.⁷⁷

The anthroponym Gallus was encountered as early as the ancient period. In time, it probably lost the connotations related to the rooster itself or to Gallia. We could mention here Cestius Gallus, prefect of Syria in the seventh decade of the 1st century,⁷⁸ the Irish missionary Gallus (?-645/646), the one who laid the foundations

⁷⁰ Șerban Turcuș, Adinel Dincă, Mihai Hasan, Victor Vizauer, *Antroponimia în Transilvania medievală (secolele XI-XIV). Evaluarea statistică, evoluție, semnificații*, vol. I, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Mega, 2011, p. 221.

⁷¹ *Bánffy*, I, no. CXXII, pp. 142-143; no. CXXIII, pp. 143-145; no. CXXVIII, pp. 151-153; *DIR.C.XIV/4*, no. 524, pp. 357-358; no. 533, pp. 362-364; no. 569, pp. 390-392; *Anjou*, XXXI, no. 409, pp. 228-229; no. 482, pp. 267-268.

⁷² *Clébert 1995*, pp. 83-85; *Coman 1996*, pp. 36-41; *Celtic Mythology*, pp. 93.

⁷³ *La Fontaine*, pp. 22, 36-38.

⁷⁴ *Clébert 1995*, pp. 135-136.

⁷⁵ *Coman 1996*, p. 41.

⁷⁶ *La Fontaine*, p. 76.

⁷⁷ *Coman 1996*, p. 43.

⁷⁸ *Catholic Encyclopedia*: <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=3872> (18.01.2017).

of the future monastery of Saint Gall⁷⁹ or the Polish Martinus Gallus, the author of some chronicles (1190).⁸⁰ In the area examined in this study, the first character named thus was Gall, Comes of Alba in Transylvania (about 1177).⁸¹ Later on, the frequency of this name increased, being assigned to people from various social categories, but mainly to nobles and clergy. In the 13th century, a bishop of Transylvania bore the anthroponym Gall.⁸²

Gall could designate either a person coming from somewhere in the area of the Gallia (especially in the 13th century), or the rooster in Latin (*gallus*). If at least a part of the symbolical connotations of the rooster were preserved in the anthroponym, then a person named Gallus / Gall could be a vigilant, bold, proud man and / or a good counsellor, especially in the case of the nobles or their familiars. As for clerics, the associations could refer to their gifts of preaching and “awakening” people to the divine and to faith, as shown above.

The **sow** (Porcan; in Latin: *porcarius* = swineherd, or *porca* = 1. sow, 2. the ridge of a land furrow, but also an agrarian unit of measurement in Spain). The only one that bore the name Porcan was a man mentioned in a case from the Registry of Oradea (in 1216), but we know little else about him, apart from the fact that he was accused of complicity in the kidnapping of a young girl.⁸³

The role of the sow in bestiaries was different from that of the pig. Thanks to its numerous brood, it was a symbol of fertility, this also suggesting an exuberant sexuality.⁸⁴

A “spinning sow” was carved on the southern side of the south tower of Chartres Cathedral (France), probably representing the ancient Celtic theme of the druid spinning a guiding thread, similar to Ariadne’s thread. The author has reached this conclusion by tracing the meaning of the word sow, *truie* in French, whose origins he believes to lie in the old Celtic term *truth* (wild boar). Through phonetic assimilation, *truth* came to represent the druid (*druide*).⁸⁵

The Celts also associated the pig with the category of warriors. There have been discovered helmets with representations of boars on them, due to the beasts’ ferociousness (in Antiquity the domesticated pig actually lived in a somewhat semi-wild state).⁸⁶ Finally, by its way of being, the pig also has less attractive traits: enmity to man (which is why it gets to be sacrificed), squalor, laziness and greed.⁸⁷

⁷⁹ *Catholic Encyclopedia*: <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5104> (18.01.2017).

⁸⁰ *Catholic Encyclopedia*: <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5348> (18.01.2017).

⁸¹ *Szentpétery*, I/1, no. 128, p. 41; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 12, p. 6.

⁸² *Hurmuzaki, Densuşianu*, I/1, no. CXCIII, pp. 249-253; Imre Szentpétery, *Regesta regum stirpis Arpadianae critico-diplomatica / Az Árpádházi királyok okleveleinek kritikai jegyzéke*, I Kötet (1001-1270), 3 Füzet, Budapest, 1930, no. 1577, pp. 482-483; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 285, pp. 329-333; *DIR.C.XIII/2*, no. 93, p. 100.

⁸³ *Regestrum Varadinense*, no. 169, p. 215; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 67/169, p. 84.

⁸⁴ *Clébert 1995*, p. 251.

⁸⁵ Louis Charpentier, *Les mystères de la cathédrale de Chartres*, Robert Laffont, Paris, 1966, pp. 243-244.

⁸⁶ *Celtic Mythology*, pp. 379-380.

⁸⁷ *Coman 1996*, pp. 65-66.

All we know about Porcan is that he may have been from Bihor County, or the adjoining counties, whence most of the individuals listed in the cases of the Registry of Oradea originated. There were quite a lot of foreigners in Oradea and the surrounding areas, so Porcan may have been a foreigner, or even a „guest”. If so, maybe Porcan owned a property that brought him plenty and wealth; hence, his nickname / name. Alternatively, Porcan may have had a pugnacious, belligerent temperament, especially since he was summoned in Oradea for his above-mentioned association in the kidnapping of a young girl; or, he may have been just a portly, gourmand man, being likened to the pig on that account.

The **falcon** (Solum / Solyam / Solym; in Hungarian: *sólyom* = falcon). The cleric Benedictus, servant of Bishop Petru of Transylvania, was nicknamed the Falcon (*Benedictus dictus Solum / Solyam / Solym*), being mentioned in documents in 1304 and 1307.⁸⁸

Alongside the eagle, the falcon was considered the most noble of birds. For the Egyptians, the falcon was the bird of Horus, master of heaven, the piercing gaze of the bird being considered one with the gaze of the god. The hieroglyph for the falcon came to signify: loftiness, superiority, victory. In bestiaries, the falcon was the most important hunting bird. The German Emperor Frederick II wrote a personal treatise on falconry, titled *Ars venandi how avibus* (1247). The falcon was also a sign of high social standing, being represented on seals and coats of arms. Its main attribute was vigilance, but it was also associated with victory, as already shown above.⁸⁹

As regards Benedict *dictus Solyam*, the main characteristics of the falcon that could be attributed to him were vigilance and, perhaps, nobility, too. Like in the majority of the cases of people with animal names or nicknames brought into discussion here, the information about Benedict is too scanty to allow us to determine clearly the reason or reasons that led to the granting of his nickname Solyam – the Falcon.

The **crow** (Voryu; in Hungarian: *vorju* = crow). We have detected a single individual with this nickname, the noble Johannes Varyu, a servant of Master Vesceu (Vezsceus), mentioned in a document from the year 1346.⁹⁰ It is possible that this individual was not from Transylvania or the contiguous counties, but from Tolna County (Hungary).

The name of this bird was assigned to individuals who had dark skin, either naturally black or dirty. One such person was the young woman Kracka (the Crow), one of the wives of the Viking hero Ragnar Lodbrok, who was so called because in her childhood she was always full of soot and blackness.⁹¹

⁸⁸ *UB*, I, no. 300, pp. 228-229; no. 306, p. 234; no. 307, pp. 234-235; *DIR.C.XIV/1*, no. 44, pp. 36-37; no. 67, pp. 50-51; no. 68, p. 51.

⁸⁹ *Clébert 1995*, pp. 285-287.

⁹⁰ *A nagykállói Kállay-család levéltára*, I (1224-1350), Budapest, 1943, no. 853, p. 196; *DIR.C.XIV/4*, no. 466, p. 319; *Anjou-kori oklevéltár (1346)*, XXX, ed. Piti Ferenc, Budapest-Szeged, 2014, no. 767, p. 422.

⁹¹ *Mitologia nordică. Mituri și legende*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1992, p. 133 (Infra: *Mitologia nordică*).

The symbolism of the raven, a bird related to the crow (oftentimes, no difference was made between the two, as they are both part of the *Corvus* genus) is, first of all, suggestive of longevity, from which wisdom, cyclical regeneration and even immortality are derived.⁹² The raven was associated with the gift of foreseeing; being a symbol of the underworld, it could represent both rebirth and death. In folklore there is a well-known belief that a person is going to die in the house above which a raven hovers.⁹³ The ravens carried by the god Odin (also called “the raven-god”) on his shoulders were called Hugin and Mumin, that is, Thought and Memory; they were sent by the god to spy out in the nine worlds and inform him about all their secrets.⁹⁴ Their opposite is the raven presented by Jean de la Fontaine in the fable “The Raven Wishing to Imitate the Eagle,” a self-conceited character, full of itself, “evil and covetous,” greedy and aspiring to great deeds.⁹⁵

Like in the other cases, it is difficult to determine clearly what motivations lay behind the assignation of this name / nickname. Was Johannes Varyu a man with spying inclinations and / or qualities? Did he have the gift of foresight? Or was his skin darker or his hair an intense black? We could not say. In any case, Johannes Varyu may have had any or even several of these attributes.

The **crayfish** (Raak / Roac). If this name truly referred to the crayfish and falls within the scope of our research, then we may consider a serf of the fortress of Solnoc, mentioned in documents in 1292.⁹⁶

The peculiar morphological structure of the crayfish has stimulated the people’s imagination, giving birth to legends and riddles. These are focused on its backwards walk, scissor-like claws and long antennae. One of the legends explains the backward scuttling of the crayfish by the fact that it was the last creature that came in front of the Deity when He gave eyes to every living thing, the crayfish being punished for its delay by having its eyes appended at the end of its tail; since then it has been forced to walk with its tail in front.⁹⁷ In other legends, the crayfish was seen both as a “holy” animal, because it stole the iron spikes from the place of the crucifixion, and as a creature of the “devil,” because it was allegedly created out of the devil’s nail.⁹⁸

As regards the fortress serf Raak / Roac, we cannot establish with certainty where his name came from, but we can assume that it was determined by one of the attributes listed above which could be associated with a man, especially with an individual that had military duties: alertness, as if he had eyes at his back, too, much like the crayfish; combativeness, reminiscent of the claws or pincers of the crayfish; a good (“holy”) or evil (“devilish”) man.

⁹² *Evseev 1983*, p. 111.

⁹³ *Celtic Mythology*, pp. 391-392.

⁹⁴ *Mitologia nordică*, p. 24.

⁹⁵ *La Fontaine*, pp. 40-41.

⁹⁶ *DIR.C.XIII/2*, no. 423, pp. 383-384.

⁹⁷ *Coman 1986*, p. 212.

⁹⁸ *Coman 1986*, p. 213.

The **blackbird** (Rigou; in Hungarian: *rigó* = blackbird). A single person had this name / nickname. He was a vineyard-keeper in the village of Mghyer, belonging to the Chapter of Arad (1202-1203).⁹⁹ This is also one of the few anthroponyms on our list that can be dated with certainty in the 12th century.

In heraldry, only the female appears, signifying resignation and a state of chagrin.¹⁰⁰ The blackbird is both a messenger-bird (it is among the first birds that herald spring) and a symbol of eroticism.¹⁰¹ Being a singing bird, this attribute should not be forgotten, since this seems the most plausible motivation for naming or nicknaming someone Rigou / Blackbird.¹⁰²

Finally, we need to point out a very important thing. The majority of these animal names may have had to do with the old popular belief in the cleanliness of these creatures regarding health. Up until the contemporary era, there have survived customs involving the changing of a sick child's name with the name of an animal, in order for the child to take over the cleanliness and regenerative power of that creature and to heal. The advantage of changing the anthroponym was that disease, the Devil, or "evil" could no longer recognise the individual in question.¹⁰³

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Instead of conclusions, we merely wish to draw attention to the importance of the study of anthroponyms, whether they are related to animals or of a different nature (linked to ethnicity, plants, etc.). Understanding the motivations behind granting these names and nicknames may contribute to a deeper knowledge of the society in which they were used.

⁹⁹ *Szentpétery*, I/1, no. 202, p. 61-66; *DIR.C.XI-XIII/1*, no. 41, pp. 23-27.

¹⁰⁰ *Clébert 1995*, p. 196.

¹⁰¹ *Coman 1996*, p. 128.

¹⁰² As a curiosity: in Maramureş, more precisely in the area of the town of Sighet (and maybe in other regions as well), the elders used to recount that when they were teenagers (in the first 2-3 decades of the 20th century), when harvesting grapes on a noble's estate, they were made to sing or to whistle. The motivation behind this gesture was to determine the pickers to eat as few of the grapes as possible.

Could there possibly have been any connection between the fact that the individual Rigou / Blackbird owned a vineyard and bore the name of a songbird? Perhaps future research will give us a satisfactory answer.

¹⁰³ *Coman 1986*, pp. 145, 178-179; *Coman 1996*, pp. 145, 181-182.