

## APPELLATIVES DESIGNATING PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTING THE TAXES IN THE PAST

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**Abstract.** *We proposed ourselves that, in the pages of the present article, to present few of the names of some functions that could be found, at some point, among the preoccupations from the Romanian administration: those that refer to persons responsible for collecting the taxes and the imposts (desetnic, dijmar, globnic, ilișar, mitar etc.). Most of the terms are, today, part of the archaic vocabulary of the Romanian language. Their existence was proved to be a conjuncture one, limited in time by the succession of some different types of organizing a society and by the political, economic or military subordination, come from the outside borders. The knowledge of the old appellatives constitutes, seldom, an important stage in their more efficient explaining and offers in the same time, the lexical retrospective of the events from our past.*

**Keywords:** *Vocabulary, modernization, cultural influences, crafts, taxes.*

The evolution and the modernization of a society usually brings, modifications as concerning the vocabulary because, “when the society changes, the language must adjust and transform”<sup>1</sup>. Generally, the economic, social and political changes from a certain region, such are those with cultural character, are clearly identified at the lexical level too; as a consequence, we can say that the lexis plays a very special role in reconstructing the image of certain epochs (or their particular aspects) from our closer or further past.

The disappearance of some crafts and functions and the emerging of some new one represent – for example – a phenomenon that took place constantly along the time; it is directly connected to the historic events that appeared in the Romanian society and, implicitly, to the cultural influences came from the peoples that got in touch along the time.

Meanwhile, the lexis enriched permanently with appellatives, necessary to express the new rapports between people, or the new structure and hierarchization from the domains of the state organization (economy, industry, administration, justice, education, army etc.). But, as some words entered in the vocabulary, others were put in the regional or archaic, as a consequence of the fact that they weren’t actual anymore, didn’t correspond to the transformations from the community.

We proposed ourselves that, in the pages of the present article, to present few of the names of some functions that could be found, at some point, among the preoccupations from the Romanian administration: those that refer to persons responsible for collecting the taxes and the imposts. For this reason, we consulted a part from the collections of documents that exist today in the archives, dictionaries and papers that had as object the description of certain periods from our history<sup>2</sup>. From here, we have taken some names of which definitions confronted and completed, when necessary, with those from the Romanian, older or newer, explicative dictionaries. We present further on, alphabetically, these names:

**Accizár.** Person who raised the taxes (levied at barriers for certain goods, at the entrance in a commune or a town).

**Aghénș.** Fisc’s agent.

**Birciu.** High official who collected the tribute.

**Cornár.** (in Moldavia, in the 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries) Official who collected *cornăritul* (tax, impost for the horned cattle).

**Cunicér.** Official charged with the collecting of *cunița* (impost paid for the foreign herds of cattle, brought or bought by foreigners and kept in Moldavia for graving).

**Desétnic.** Official charged with the collecting of *desetina* (impost of 10 percent from the crops; tithe, quitrent; tax for the hives and pigs).

<sup>1</sup> Klaus Steinke, Ariton Vraciu, *Introducere în lingvistica balcanică*, Iași, Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, 1999, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> The collections of documents DRH and DIR, Walachia and Moldavia; *Instituții feudale din țările române*; *Dicționar* (coord. Ovid Sachelarie and Nicolae Stoicescu), Bucharest, Editura Academiei Române, 1988; Nicolae Stoicescu, *Sfatul domnesc și marii dregători în Țara Românească și Moldova în secolele XIV-XVII*, Bucharest, Editura Academiei Române, 1968; Gheorghe Cronț, *Instituții medievale românești*, Bucharest, 1969; N. Grigoraș, *Instituții feudale din Moldova, I. Organizarea de stat până la mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea*, Bucharest, 1971; idem, *Dregătorii târgurilor moldovenești și atribuțiunile lor până la Regulamentul organic*, Iași, 1942; *Dicționarul elementelor românești din documentele slavo-române. 1374-1600* (DERS), Bucharest, Editura Academiei Române, 1981; Gh. Bulgăr, Gh. Constantinescu-Dobridor, *Dicționar de arhaisme și regionalisme*, vol. I-II, Bucharest, Editura Saeculum Vizual, 2007; Monica Mihaela Busuioc, *Munca și răsplata ei. Secolele XVII-XVIII. Studiu de terminologie*, Bucharest, The National Foundation for Science and Art, The Romanian Academy. The Institute of Linguistics „Iorgu Iordan”, 2001; Lazăr Șăineanu, *Dicționar universal al limbii române*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Craiova, Scrisul Românesc, 1922; *Dicționar explicativ al limbii române*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Bucharest, Univers Enciclopedic, 1996; Veronica Tamaș, Alexandru Popescu-Mihăiești, *Lexicon de cuvinte rare și ieșite din uz*, Rm. Vâlcea, Editura Conphys, 2005; *Istoria dreptului românesc*, vol. I, Bucharest, Editura Academiei Române, 1980; *Micul dicționar academic*, (MDA), vol. I-IV, Bucharest, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2003; Iustina Burci, *Dicționar de meserii și funcții vechi*, Craiova, Editura Universitaria, 2009.

**Dijmár.** Official charged with the stating and collecting of quitrent (impost that represented the tenth part from the main products, levied by the feudal lords from the dependent peasants).

**Folár.** Official charged with the collecting of *folărit* (impost for the sheepfolds, cheese, in Moldavia in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries).

**Fumărár.** Official who collected *fumăritul* (impost that was paid in Wallachia and Moldavia, for smoke or every chimney of the peasants' houses, for each house).

**Găletár.** Official charged with the collecting of *găleata* (impost, quitrent consisting of cereals and hay, in the Romanian regions, during the Middle Age).

**Gărdurár.** Official charged with the collecting of *gărdurărit* (several taxes imposed for the vineyards in the hilly region from Muntenia).

**Glóbnic.** Official charged with the collecting of the fine (charge or money indemnification, penalty for someone who was found guilty of certain offences or crimes; tax paid to forbid bringing someone to law).

**Goştinár.** High official, charged with the collecting of *goştina* (tax, tribute, impost – consisting of sheep, pigs or cattle – levied in the Romanian regions).

**Haraccíu.** Official charged with the collecting of *haraci* (annual tribute that the vassal countries paid to the Ottoman Empire). *Haracci başa* – the supervisor of the *haraci*.

**Hártiár.** Official charged, in Moldavia, with the instituting and the levying of the impost established through the papers' system.

**Ilišar.** Official that collected *ilişul* (cereals impost that was levied in Moldavia and Transylvania).

**Mitár.** Person who leased the collecting of the imposts.

**Mortasíp.** Public weightier of the products and collector of some public taxes, in the Phanariot period; (mortasipie = tax that was collected at the selling of the products and that was calculated according to their weight or for each item).

**Páznic.** Member in the communal council, charged with the collecting of the imposts.

**Pârcăláb.** (In Muntenia and Oltenia) Administrator of the boyars' villages and monasteries; rural tax collector. [(in Walachia and Moldavia, in the Middle Age). Title conferred to the official leader of a county, district, walled city, having military, administrative and judicial attributions. (in Transylvania) The keeper of a prison; jailer].

**Pârcălăbél.** Helper of the rural tax collector.

**Perceptor.** Official charged with the collecting of official imposts and taxes.

**Peşchegiu.** Official of the seraglio, charged with the levying of tribute and with the guarding of the gifts received by the sultan.

**Peşingiu.** Official charged with the collecting of the taxes money.

**Podár.** Official who collected *podăritul* (tax that was collected for the crossing over a bridge or for the transportation on a mobile bridge) in the Middle Age.

**Poşlinár.** Person who collected *poşlina* (export tax for cereals and cattle); customs officer.

**Pripăşár.** High official charged with the collecting of the fine for the cattle found in the foreign sowings.

**Procuratór.** Roman magistrate chose from the enfranchised Roman slaves, charged with the collecting of the imposts and the administration of the imperial provinces.

**Publicán.** Person who collected the taxes from the old Romans.

**Răbojár.** Person who collected the imposts.

**Rohatcár.** Person who supervised the passing through *rohatcă* (a place from where people entered the city and where were collected the taxes for the merchandise designated for sale).

**Saigíu.** Official charged by the Porte with the collecting of *beilic* (monopole regarding the buying of sheep for the palace, of which value was established, generally in an abusive way, by the buyer) and of *oierit* (payment in kind or money levied in the Middle Age, in Walachia, for the sheep; impost paid for the sheep graving) from the Romanian regions; high official who counted the sheep in order to levy the *beilic*. *Saigibaşa* – the supervisor of *saigii*.

**Sámeş.** Official charged (in the Middle Age in Wallachia) with the collecting of the impost from the tax payers; administrative clerks who collected different taxes and who supervised the straight course of some institutions.

**Sámeşer.** *Sameş*.

**Scăunăş.** Person who collected *zehereaua* (alimentary products that the Romanian regions had to place at the disposal of the ottoman army).

**Slúger.** (in the Middle Age, in the Romanian regions) Title conferred to the boyar who was charged with the providing (of portioned meat) for the ruler's court and army. *Vel sluger* or *mare sluger* – the supervisor of the *slugeri*. *Sluger al doilea*, *sluger al treilea* – the *sluger* immediately subordinated to the *marele sluger*.

**Strângătór.** Tax collector.

**Şugubínár.** Person who collected from the guilty people *şugubina* (fine in money or cattle, levied for the compensation of he homicide, robbery or adultery).

**Talerár.** Official who collected the taxes in thalers.

**Taxidár.** Person who collected the taxes.

**Tălerás.** (in Moldavia) Official charged with the collecting of the imposts.

**Trepădător, -oare.** Person who collected the taxes.

**Tutunár.** Official charged with the supervision of the tobacco tax collecting.

**Ușurgíu.** Person who collected *ușurul* (quitrent once paid by the Tartars for the place they occupied in Moldavia; payment in kind for grounding).

**Vámeș.** Person who levied the tax paid at the entrance in a town, for using a bridge, a road etc.; person who collected the taxes, imposts (for goods, products). *Vameș mare* – high official, charged with the collecting of the incomes resulted from customs and with the administration of the customs. Person charged with the collecting of the imposts that had to be paid by the peoples under the domination of the Roman Empire.

**Vădár.** Person who collected *vădăritul* (tax paid for passing through the good customs).

**Vădrár.** Person who collected *vădrăritul* (impost that was levied in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in Moldavia, from the producers, for each three gallons of wine).

**Vămeșoáică.** Woman who levied duty.

**Vătămán.** (In the rural administration from Moldavia) mayoralty official, charged with the collection of taxes and imposts.

**Vinăricér.** Person who levied *vinăriciul* (quitrent or impost levied in Walachia and Moldavia, from the vineyards landlords, wine producers and innkeepers).

**Vistiér.** (In the Middle Age in Walachia and Moldavia) Title conferred to the high official from lordly council, who had the obligation to distribute the taxes to the tax payers, to collect them from the officials from the districts (or counties), to administrate the country's treasure (the initial and the ruler's) and to sentence the fiscal questions, that appeared when collecting the imposts. *Mare vistier*, *vistierul cel mare*, *vel-vistier* – the supervisor of *vistieri*. *Vistier al doilea (vtori)* – small boyar, of inferior rank; the helper of the great treasurer. *Vistier al treilea (treti)* – inferior rank boyar, financial inspector; in monasteries, administrator, accountant.

**Vistiernicél.** Official in the suborder of the great treasurer, charged with the collecting of the taxes from the tax payers, who became, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, member of a guild, commanded by a captain (in Walachia) or a bailiff (in Moldavia).

**Zahergíu.** Person charged with the collecting of the *zaherela* (tax, consisting of aliments, especially wheat, that the Romanian territories had to pay to the ottoman army from the walled cities from Danube or to those that were in expeditions in the nearby regions).

**Zapciú.** (In the Middle Age, in Walachia) The leader of a small rural district, subordinated to the *ispravnic*, who collected the taxes or the dues. *Zapciu de străini* – person who levied (sometimes using the force) *dajdia* to the foreign subjects.

**Zeciuitór.** Person who collected *zeciuiala* (annual tax representing the tenth part from the cereal crop, cattle etc.).

**Zlotáš.** Person charged with the collecting of imposts in zlotys.

Some of the appellatives that we have previously mentioned also have other meanings, beside that of “person charger with the collecting of certain taxes and imposts”, to which we are referring in our article. Thus, *cornarul* designated the horns seller; *podar* – a person who had a mobile bridge; street sweeper; *sameș* – the administrator or the chancellor on an estate or shepherd; *scăunaș* – intermediary, cereals and other different agricultural products buyer (from villages) or cattle; commission person, middleman; *vistier* – in Walachia had also to find and take care of the luxury items (furs, cloths etc.) and protocol from the court – with a military rank, equivalent to that of captain; police agent etc.

Most of the above terms are, today, part of the archaic vocabulary of the Romanian language. Their existence was proved to be a conjuncture one, limited in time by the succession of some different types of organizing a society and by the political, economic or military subordination, come from the outside borders. Thus, as certain structures didn't correspond anymore to the social reality, they were replaced with some new ones and their old names passed, gradually, in the secondary plan, until the total abandon<sup>3</sup>. Appellatives such: *aghenș*, *desetnic*, *fumărar*, *globnic*, *mortasip*, *pârcălab*, *poșlinar*, *saigiu*, *taxidar*, *vădrar*, *vistier*, *zapciu* etc. represent, nowadays, only lingistical proves of the past economic and administrative organization. Their value is a historical one.

The names cited in our list were kept in a great number in anthroponomy. In a period where the patronyme wasn't yet institutionalized, the name of the functions and occupations rapidly entered in the structure of the denomination formula. Having as an advantage the concision<sup>4</sup>, the clarity and, in some case, the prestige that the bearers enjoyed, the occupations have been adopted as nicknames and, later as surnames and transmitted to both the followers and to those who got in touch, in one way or another, with those functions. From the data of The Onomastic Laboratory<sup>5</sup> of the Letters Faculty of the University from Craiova, we extracted few surnames (and derivates) that are based on the above mentioned appellatives: *Dijmaru*, *Dijmărescu*, *Mitariu*, *Mitaru*, *Pârcălabu*, *Pârcălăbescu*, *Pârcălăbioru*, *Pârcălăboiu*, *Podaru*, *Podariu*, *Podărelu*, *Podărița*, *Saegiu*, *Saigiu*, *Sameș*, *Scăunașu*, *Tutunaru*, *Vameșu*, *Vătămanu*, *Vătămănel*, *Zapciu*.

<sup>3</sup> The phenomenon of the borrowings of new terms is also present nowadays. The French, but especially the English language, became the main language of communication.

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes, were used as a way of personal identification complex syntagms: *Stoian sin Oprea zet Radu Maglaviceanu*, *Ilina a lui Ion al Udrii*, *Vasile ce șede în casa Lipscăniții* etc.

<sup>5</sup> Founded by Prof. Gh. Bolocan, in 1994.

Generally speaking, the knowledge of the old appellatives constitutes, seldom, an important stage in their more efficient explaining and offers in the same time, the lexical retrospective of the events from our past. Many of the names of the old institutions, occupations, functions, “inadaptable to some new conditions of social life”<sup>6</sup>, can be found today only in the passive vocabulary of our language, as proofs for the distance covered not only by the already mentioned terminology, but also by the entire society, in general.

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<sup>6</sup> *Instituții feudale din țările române...*, p. XXIV.