THE ROLE AND PLACE OF THE *-ĂU* SUFFIX IN THE ROMANIAN TOPONYMIC SYSTEM

Elena ŞODOLESCU SILVESTRU
University "Spiru Haret", Bucharest

ABSTRACT

The article is an analysis of Romanian toponyms and hydronyms which are made up with the suffix -ău*. In Romanian this suffix is very productive at the level of all language compartments: appelatives*, *proper names and toponyms.*

The derivatives made up with this suffix and having as base nouns, *adjectives*, *verbs or interjections*, *often have a pejorative-depreciative connotation. The connotation is expressed by the suffix*, *highly frequent in usage to form popular geographical terms.*

We analysed the frequent changes from appelatives to toponyms or hydronyms by transonymization, *their distribution according to areas and hydrographic basins*, *the coincidences appeared between names of places and names of bodies of water. A higher concentration of names containing the suffix -ău is encountered in the north-west of Romania*, *since the suffix is of Hungarian origin. We conclude that a large number of toponyms are based on Romanian words containing the suffix* -ău *and they are the result of a process of toponymization.*

Key words: *apelative*, *proper name*, *toponym*, *suffix*, *toponymization*

In the Romanian onomastic system, the method of derivation holds an important place in the formation and enrichment of the proper names inventory, which has already been noticed in many speciality books.

The researchers who dealt with the problems of derivation in the Romanian language usually avoided the analysis of proper names from this point of view. Generally, they considered that the derivation at onomastic level is not very different from the derivation in the common language. The complexity of the derivational problems in toponymy and anthroponymy should have aroused not only the interest of the onomasts, but that of Romanian language specialists, because one can notice many ambiguities in the interpretation of some lexical suffixes as onomastic suffixes, without taking into account the frequent transfer of appelatives to the class of proper names.

In order to demonstrate some aspects connected to the strict approach of the problem of proper names etymology, we shall try, in this article, to analyse the Romanian toponyms derived with the *-ău* suffix, which comes from the *ó*, *ö* Hungarian suffix and, in some cases, from the *-ov/-ev* Slavic suffix. It is very productive in Romanian, due to its role in the derivational process in all three language compartments: appelatives, toponyms and anthroponyms.

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

Depending on the geographical spreading and on some historical conditions, the ***-ău*** suffix can be found in the following variants on the Romanian territory: *-ău*, *-au*, *-eu*, *-ou*; *-ălău*, *-ărău*. This variants can be found both in appelatives and in proper names.

The words derived with the *-ău* suffix are formed starting from nouns, adjectives, verbs and interjections. The new lexical units, resulted from derivation, are generally nouns, regardless of the part of speech they are derived from. We shall quote here a number of derived words, also mentioning their meaning and etymological basis.

Words derived from nouns: *băltău* "large pond" < *baltă* + *-ău*; *bâltău*, *bâlcău* "swampy place"< *bâlcă* + *-ău*; *botău* "sheperd's big club" < *boată*, *botă* + *-ău*; *căldărău* "a piece of wood from which the bucket chain hangs" < *căldare* + *-ău*; *fălcău* "large-jawed" < *falcă* + *-ău*; *genău* "eyelash" < *geană* + *-ău*; *gurău* < *gură* + *-ău*; *mâtcălău* "big spoon" < *mâtcă* + *-ălău*; *nuntălău* "big wedding" < *nuntă* + *-ălău*; *răpcău* "vineyard's dry branch" < *răpcă*, *râpcă* + *-ău*; *roşcău* "reddish" < *roşcă*, "red-haired person" + *-ău*; *scafău* "big hollow" < *scafă* + *-ău*; *spinărău* "snake" <spinare + -ău; *tecărău* "foolish and coarse-mannered person" < *teacă* + *-ărău*; *tânjălău* "beam"; *turcălău* "Turkish (man)" < *turc* + *-ălău*; *țărcălău* "little enclosure for animals" < *țarc* + *-ălău*; *țepălău* "big wooden spoon" < *țeapă* + *-ălău*; *țincău* < *ținc* + *-ău*, etc.

Words derived from verbs: *bălălău* "shame" < *bălălăi* + *-ău*; *bătălău* "club, little paddle for beating the linen, stick for pounding the garlic", "wooden hammer for beating the ground" < *bate* + *-ălău*; *blencău* "a person who always speaks well of himself and bad of the others" < *blencăi* + *-ău*; *buduşlău* "loiterer" < *buduşlui* + *-ău*; *ciorvălău* "big uproar"< *ciorovăi* + *-ău*; *colducău* "beggar" < c*olducăi* + *-ău*; *frecălău* "stirring stick" < *freca* + *-ălău*; *fugău* "partridge" < *fug* + *-ău*; *jintălău* "the stick used to cream the milk in the churn" < *jintui* + *-ău*; *lingău* "flatterer" < *linge* + *-ău*; *măsălău* "resting place for cattle" < *măsălui* "to sleep, to eat" + *-ău*; *mestecău*, *mestecălău* "stirring stick used for stirring the polenta" < *mesteca* + *-ău*, *-ălău*; *mâncău*, *mâncălău* "glutton" < *mânca* + *-ău*, *-ălău*; *ningău* "snowfall", "the month of December" < *ninge* + *-ău*; *păscălău* "place for pasture" < *pasc* + *-ău*; *pisău* "container in which something is pounded" < *pisa* + *-ău*; *pârlău* "tub in which clothes are placed in order to be simmered" < *pârl*(*ui*) "to boil, to simmer" + *-ău*; *prăbălău* "dodger" < *prăbălui* + *-ău*; *privegheu* "superintendent" < *priveghea* + *-ău*; *răblău* "thief, dangerous man" < *răblui* "to steal" + *-ău*; *şurlău* "the place where avalanches start" < *şurlui* + *-ău*; *taragău*, *trăgău* "horse's chest" < *trage* + *-ău*; *tălălău* "uproar" < t*ălălăi* + *-ău*; *torcălău* "man who spins" < t*oarce* + *-ălău*; *trăgău* "loan shark" < *trage* + *-ău*; *trămândău* "lazy man, tramp" < *trămânda* "to delay" + *-ău*; *trăncănău*

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

"tall and stupid man" < *trăncăni* + *-ău*; *zăcălău* "resting place for cattle" < *zac* + *-ău*.

Words derived from adjectives: *bălău* "fair-haired person", "fair, light-coloured" < *băl* + *-ău*; *bolândău*, *bolândeu* "nutts, crazy" < *bolând* + *-ău*, *-eu*; *bunău* "good" < *bun* + *-ău*; *cârnău* "wheat variety" < *cârn* + *-ău*; *drăgălău*, *drăngălău* "common law husband" < *drag* + *-ău*; *largău* < l*arg* + *-ău*; *lungău* < *lung* + *-ău*; *molatecău* "soft"< *molatec* + *-ău*; *molălău* "weak" < *moale* + *-ălău*; *molău* "lazybones" < *moale* + *-ău*; *mutălău* "dumb man; silent, grumbling man; silly man" < *mut* + *-ălău*; *prostănău* "stupid man, silly man" < p*rostan* + *-ău*; *spânău* "glabrous man" < *spân* + *-ău*; *surdălău* "deaf and stupid man" < *surd* + *-ălău*; *tămpău*, *tâmpău* "silly, abnormal man" < *tâmp* + *-ău*.

Words derived from interjections: *bâțâțău* "feast, party" < *bâța* + *-ău*; *bocălău* "which/who knocks" < *boc* + *-ălău*; *boncău* "sledge hammer" < *bonc* + *-ău*; *crancău* "jackdaw", *croncău* "raven" < *cronc* + *-ău*; *cronțău* "hard bread" < *cronț* + *-ău*; *hăpău* "glutton" < *hap* + *-ău*; *horcău* "who snores"< *horc* + *-ău*.

All the examples given above are nouns, regardless of their derivational basis. The meanings of the derived words go beyond the meanings of the bases and usually refer to people (shortcomings and qualities), the suffix usually introducing a deprecating, depreciatory or augmentative nuance (see *băbălău*, *clănțău*, *lingău*, *morândău*, *mutălău*, *nătărău*, *tândălău*, *trăncănău*, *tutălău*, etc.).

All these words have a Romanian word as basis, regardless of its origin. *Bolând*, for example, from the Hungarian word *bolond*, is a Romanian word widely used in Transylvania and Banat. The word derived from this basis, *bolândău*, is of Romanian origin. The augmentative-deprecatory nuance introduced by the suffix proves it. A number of words end in *-ău*, but they cannot be considered derived words because the root does not exist in Romanian. For example, *ancău* < Magh. *ankó* "clumsy, dull", *bancău* < Magh. *bánkó* "stilts"; *ciurgău* < Magh. *csurgó* "water source", etc.

A very large number of words with the *-ău/-eu* suffix are **popular geographical terms** (**entopic terms**) – mostly heights, slopes, peaks, rocks, gorges, plane laces, hollows, forests, hydronyms (running waters, stangnant waters), human activities related to the soil, to animals, plants, roads, etc.

We considered it necessary to list some of these terms, as well as some data about their spreading in various Romanian counties, because many of them can be found in the toponymy and hydronymy of the entire country.

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

Here are some examples: *adăpău* “water source converted for drinking or for watering cattle” (Ab, Bt, Bv, Db, Dj, Gj, Mh, Ph, Sv, Vs) < *adăpa* + *-ău*; *bahahău* “hollow made for collecting rain-water” (Gj); *barcău* “marsh, pond” (Cs) v. *bărcău*; *băgău* “path on the very bottom of a river bed or a valley” (Hd) < *bag* + *-ău*; *bălătău* “muddy, stagnant water” (Bc) < *baltă* + *-ău*; *bălcău* “marshy place, lake” (Olt.) < *bălc* + *-ău*; *băltărău* “big pond” < *baltă* + *-ărău*; *băltău* “hollow for collecting water” (Db, Nț); “big pool” < *baltă* + *-ău*; *bărăscău* “muddy, marshy place, with lots of water” (Db); *bărcălău* “swampy river meadow”(Tl) < *bărc* + *-ălău*; *bărcău* “marshy river meadow” (Dj, Gj, Nț, Ot, Sv, Tl) < *bărc* + *-ău*; *bărgău* “longish hillock” (Db); *bicaşău* “large stone, burried in the ground” (Mm) < magh. *békasó*; *bicaştău* “gravel ground, sand” (Bh); *bâdâdău* “weedy place” (Ot); *bâhlău* “foul water” (Nț) < *bâhlă* + *-ău*; *bâlhău* “marshy place where reed grows” (Dj, Ot) < *bâlcă* + *-ău*; *bâldâhău* “deeper place in the river bed, where children bathe” (Ot) < onomatopoea “bâldâh”; *bâlhău* “muddy and marshy place where reed grows”(Ag); *bâltău* “swimming place with deep water in the river bed” (Ag, Db) < *bâltă* + *-ău*; *bârlău* “hollows with water” (Ph); *bobâldău* “big, pointed boulder”(Ag); *bobâlnău* “small knoll” (Ag); *bobârcău* “big, pointed boulder” (Ag); *bohâltău* “the place where logs are stacked” (Sv); *bolătău* “moving ground, place holding water” (Sv); *borău* “noisily running water” (Cs, Tm) < *bară* + *-ău*; *bordău* “ground or stone knoll on a mountain slope” (Ag, Dj, Ph, Tl); *botântău* “the upper end of the gutter where logs are stacked before they are sent to the valley” (Bc, Nț); *braniștău* “sheep manure, the place where manure is stacked” (Bz) < *braniță* + *-ău*; *brădău* “big bushy fir-tree” (Gj, Ph) < *brad* + *-ău*; *bubulău* “big knoll, carbuncle-shaped” (Ag); *budălău* “lake in a flooded area” (Bv); *budulău* “water source converted for drinking or for watering cattle” (Ag, Sb) < magh. *buduló*; *budurău* for meaning, see *budulău* (Ab, Hd, Vl) < *budur* + *-ău*; *bulătău* “muddy pond, pool” < maybe rus. *boloto* “marsh” + *-ău*; *bundileu*, *bunghilău* “knoll, hill slope” (Ot, Vl); *burău* “falls” (Cs) < *bur* (the upstream end of a stormy running water) + *-ău*; *butălău* “water source converted for drinking” (Sb); *butău* “block of wood” (Ab, Ag); *căciulău* “not too high, but pointed hillock” (Tl) < c*ăciulă* + *-ău*; *căldău* variant of *gâldău*; *călnău* “part of a former streamlet” (Il); *cănău* “the central flow of a running water” (Il); *cănțău* “small, sharp, clapper-shaped top” (Ag); *cealău* “bush”; *cergău* “wooden trough” (Bv); *chichilău* “bigger irregular knoll in plain or river meadow areas” (Bc, Bz); *chiralău* “enclosure where lambs are kept in spring” (Bv) < magh. *kerülö*; *ciclău* “big, pointed knoll with round base” (Bv); *ciocău* “the beaklike part before the top, with pointed end” (Ab) < *cioc* + *-ău*; *ciocâlteu* “pointed, salience-like top” (Vl) < magh. *csikoltó*; *ciocârlău* “hillock, pointed hill; hill, mountain” (Ag, Cj, Db, Gj, Hd, If, Mh, Nt, Ot, Vl); *cioclău* for meaning see *ciocău* (Bt, Ph, Sb); *ciorău* “water source running through a tube drain” (Bc, Hd, Mh, Mm, Ot, Ph, Sv, Tl, Vs) < *cior*(*ăi*) + *-ău*; *ciordău* “water source running through a drain” (Ag, Dj, Gj, If); *ciorgău* for meaning see *ciorău* (Sm, Sv); “noisy water falling”

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

(Bv); “place where clothes are washed” (Bv) < v. *ciurgău*; *ciuciurău* “trough” (Bz, Cs, Ph) < *ciuciur* + *-ău*; *ciurău* “water torrent” (Cs, Ph, Tm) < *ciur*(*ue*) “to run (about water)” + *-ău*; *ciurdău* see above *ciordău*; *ciurgău* “water source running through a drain; noisy water falling” < magh. *csurgó* (*csorgó*); *ciurlău* “little falls” (Cs) < vb. *ciurli* “to run (about water)” + *-ău*; *clănțău* “small, sharp, clapper-shaped top” (Ab, Ag, Br, Bv, Bz, Cț, Db, Dj, Gj, Gl, Hd, If, Il, Mh, Nț, Ot, Sv, Tl, Tr, Vl, Vs) < *clanță* + *-ău*; *clențău* “sharp rocky snag” (Mh, Tm) < *cleanța* or interjection *cleanț*, *clanț* + *-ău*; *cobârlău* “place between houses; bear’s shelter during winter” < *cobârlă* (colibă) + *-ău*; *cocălău* “the part before the top, with pointed end” (Ab, Br, Bz, Dj, Hd, If, Nț, Tl, Tr, Vs); *cocârlău* “little ground hillock” (Bt, Db, Ph) < *cocârlă* + *-ău*; *cocârțău* “little ground hillock” (Vl); *colțău* “big pointed boulder” (Ab); “barren tooth-shaped stone summit” (Ab, Bc, Cj, Cț, Hd, Mm, Sv, Tl) < *colț* + *-ău*; *copău* “wide and long height”; *copârțău* “little hillock with steep slopes” (Ag, Db, Dj, Gj, Hd, Mh, Tr, Vs); *corhălău* “place with hollow trees” (Nț) < *corhă* + *-ălău*; *curcidău* “high, forested slope” (Vl); *cuşcău* “narrow arduous trough-shaped road”; *darampău* “place where hay is lowered from the hills” (Ab); *dâmbău* “pointed hillock” (Mm) < *dâmb* + *-ău*; *dângău* “the stopper of a mountain creek for collecting water in order to carry logs downstream”; *dârâpău* “very steep slope, on which you can reach a valley” (Cj); *dudurău* “sharp top, from which stone breaks loose” < *dudur* + *-ău*; *dulău* “higher hillock” (Cj); “path for walking on foot or for cart”; “strip of uncultivated land” (Ar); *durău* “sharp top, from which stone breaks loose” (Mm, Vl) < *dur*(*ui*) + *-ău*; *durgălău* “mountain road with crosswise logs to ease the transport of wood down the valley” (Bc, Nț, Sv); *durgău* “deeper place in the river bed carved by the spinning water” (Cj); *feredeu* “water source gushing out noisily” (Cj); “falls on a water flow” (Sb) < magh. *feredö*; *fugău* “water source disappearing under ground”, “valley drying in summer” (Nț) < *fug* + *-ău*; *furgău* “deep pond” (Mm); “cave-like gully on a hill slope” (Mm); *găzdău* “various sized hollow, natural or man-made; small deep hollow ground; hole on the banks of a running water; short and steep valley on a side” (Ab, Hd); “noisy water falling, very big pond, big lake” (Hd); *ghelmeu* “knoll higher than the knolls around it” (Ab, Ag, Bz, Cț, Cv, Dj, Gj, Mh, Mm, Nț, Sv, Tl, Tr); *ghelmău* “pasture” (Cj); *ghergheleu*, *gărgălău* “round or sharp knoll; earth or sand heap serving as sign between people’s strips” (Db, Gj, Mh); *gâldău* “deep hole, filled with water”; “pool”; “deeper spot in the water” (Ab, Ag, Bc, Br, Bv, Db, Dj, Hd, Il, Nț, Sv, Vl, Vr, Vs); *gâlmău* (*gălmău*) “knoll higher than the knolls around it” (Tl); “natural hollow in the ground, small or large, in which water goes into the ground” (Nț) < *gâlmă* + *-ău*; *gurgulău* “little knoll” (Hd); *hadânău* “water fall” (Tr); *hagău* “road between two hills” (Bz, Sv); “place where stones are rolling” (Ab); “trough-like track on which logs slide down the valley” (Hd); *halău* “the place where they put salt for sheep” (Cț, Mm, Sv); “ford for watering cattle” (Bv, Gj, Mm, Sv) < magh. *háló*; *hălgău* “road between two hills” (Hd); *hătău*, *hățău* “place where hay

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

is lowered off the hill" (Mm); *hălădău* "bottom of a deep valley" (Bc); *hălăstău* "lake surrounded by marshes" (Hd); *hățău* "the sheep path, difficult and rocky path, usually followed by animals" (Mm); *herbedeu* "stormy and noisily running water" (Dj); *hintău* "place beaten by people or by animals" (Nț); *hârău* "high, pointed hillock on the summit of a hill" (Sb); *hârcău* "valley drying in summer" (Vr); "boggy waterside" (Vr); *hârlău* "holes made by water" (Ag, Bc, Bt, Dj, Gj, Hd, If, Il, Ot, Sv, Tl, Tr); *hâtnău* "pothole" (Vr); *holâmbău* "low, but very long hillock"(Tm); *hosalău* "tillable place left uncultivated, on which natural hay-fields grow" (Ab); *lăcău* "pond, lake"; "pool" (Ot) < *lac* + *-ău*; *margnău* "low, but very long hillock" (Hd); *masalău*, *măsălău* "resting place for cattle or sheep"(Mm, Transilvania) < *măsăl*(*ui*) + *-ău*; *măzgălău* "soft and slippery land"(Mm) < *măzgă* + *-ălău*; *mălăstău* "pit made for collecting water" (Hd); *mățălău* "long narrow strip of tillable land" (Gj, Vl) < *maț* + *-ălău*; *mâzgău* "slippery frost" (Mh) < *mâzgă* + *-ău*; *moțău* "longer and narrow prominence on a hill or mountain slope" (Hd) < *moț* + *-ău*; *padău* "stockyard" (Arvinte-Ursu); *paradău* "totally ruined and degraded place or land" (Porucic, Rotaru); *păscălău* "pasture place, clearing with pasture on the riverside" < *pasc* + *-ău*; *pârău* "bottom of valley" (Ag); *pârlău* "place by the river where women do the washing" (Ab, Bt, Bz, Cs, Cț, Dj, Gj, Gl, Hd, If, Mh, Mm, Ot, Ph, Sv, Tl, Tr, Vl) < *pârl*(*ui*) + *-ău*; *podeu* "small and narrow platform, along the coast" (Ab) < *pod* + *-eu*; *podileu* "sharp hillock on a plain, hill or mountain" (Hd) < *podilă* + *-eu*; *podireu* for meaning see *podileu* (Ab, Nț, Sv); *polocău* "landslide, uneven place, sliding land" (Mm); *popândău* "isolated hillock" (Tr); *prodău* "place where holes are made in the ice for doing the washing during winter" (Gj); *pustău* "uncultivated land" (Mm); *răpădău* "sudden slope change" (Nț); *răcăstău* "flood stop", "enclosure" < magh. *rekesztö*; *răcăşteu* "lake or pond banks (shallow sandy water)" (Gj, Vl); *răşcău* "slope"; *retezău* "height with cut off top" (Nț) < *reteza* + *-ău*; *râpău* "deep and abrupt place between heights" < *râpă* + *-ău*; *rucău* "mountain branch; inlet; man-made inlet for mills, saw mills, irrigation and fishing" (Mm); *şarlău*, *şirlău* "stream"; *şurlău* "the place where avalanches start in winter" < *şurl*(*ui*) + *-ău*; *țicău* "hill top" < *țic* "vârf" + *-ău*; *țiclău* "landslides in the shape of hillocks"; "hill or mountain top"; "little holm" < *țiclă* "hill top" +*-ău*; *țicmău* "high and sharp top of hill or mountain" < *țicmă* "top" + *-ău*; *țifleu* "sharp hill top" < țiflă + -eu; *țiglău* "cliff, summit" (Trans.); *țigmanău* "sharp mountain top" < *țigmană* + *-ău*; *țârău* "water source, stream" < *țâr* + *-ău*; *țurău* "water source" < *țur* + *-ău*; *țurțurău* "falls" < *țurțur* + *-ău*; *valău*, *vălău* "trough for watering the cattle"; *zăcălău* "resting place for cattle" < *zac* + *-ău*.

Here is a list of village names and watercourses names formed with the *-ău* suffix, names excerpted from *The Reversed Dictionary of Romanian Localities* and from *The Dictionary of Romanian Watercourses*, as well as from the Index of Romanian Localities and the Atlas of Water Cadastre.

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

Across the country there are over 200 names of administrative units (villages and towns). We shall list some of them, by counties, divided into two main groups: the south-east region and the north-west region.

In the **south-east region** we have the following toponyms ended in *-ău*: Argeş: *Bântău*, *Mățău*; Bacău: *Asău*, *Bacău*, *Bălătău*, *Bolotău*, *Carahlău*, *Ferestrău*, *Tazlău*; Botoşani: *Copălău*, *Cuzlău*; Brăila: *Jirlău*, *Tăcău*; Buzău: *Buzău*, *Cislău*, *Hardadău*, *Pănătău*, *Tisău*; Constanța: *Almălău*; Dâmbovița: *Ghemălău*; Galați: *Tăplău*; Ialomița: *Gâldău*; Gorj: *Reslău*; Iaşi: *Curagău*, *Hârlău*; Ilfov: *Cărătnău*, *Câlnău*, *Făcău*, *Mirău*, *Tămădău*, *Vărbilău*; Neamț: *Ceahlău*, *Şugău*, *Tarcău*, *Tazlău*; Prahova: *Vărbilău*; Suceava: *Falcău*, *Sadău*, *Țibău*, *Vițău*; Teleorman: *Gărăgău*, *Tăvârlău*; Tulcea: *Azaclău*; Vaslui: *Bagău*; Vâlcea: *Otăsău*; Vrancea: *Boțârlău*, *Herăstrău*, *Motnău*, *Țipău*.

In the **north-west region** Alba: *Băgău*, *Bântău*, *Beşinău*, *Cergău Mare*, *Cergău Mic*, *Cicău*, *Cricău*, *Hădărău*, *Mânău*, *Mirăslău*, *Răcătău*, *Răhău*, *Sărăscău*, *Tău*, *Tău Bistra*; Arad: *Bacău de Mijloc*, *Căcărău*, *Mânerău*, *Luguzău*, *Saturău*, *Siclău*, *Tăgădău*, *Tămădău Mare*, *Ususău*; Bihor: *Buduslău*, *Cărăsu*, *Chişcău*, *Cordău*, *Fonău*, *Forău*, *Husasău de Criş*, *Husasău de Tinca*, *Lorău*, *Mierlău*, *Rontău*, *Sacalasău*, *Sarcău*, *Sântău Mare*, *Sântău Mic*, *Vaşcău*, *Vărăsău*; Bistrița-Năsăud: *Coldău*, *Hagău*, *Hălmăsău*, *Tău Cătun*, *Țigău*; Braşov: *Bacifalău*, *Părău*; Cluj: *Câțcău*, *Ciurgău*, *Dângău Mic*, *Dângău Mare*, *Făgădău*, *Gârbău*, *Gârbău Dejului*, *Gilău*, *Hogău*, *Macău*, *Mărgău*, *Şigău*; Covasna: *Bicfalău*, *Ghidfalău*, *Icfalău*, *Micfalău*, *Chichirău*, *Comandău*, *Comolău*, *Dobârlău*, *Lisnău*, *Zăbrătău*; Hunedoara: *Bicău*, *Hăşdău*; Maramureş: *Bârgău*, *Cicârlău*, *Coltău*, *Inău*, *Sarasău*, *Şugău*, *Țicău*; Mureş: *Cipău*, *Cirhagău*, *Ciurgău*, *Dâmbău*, *Fărăgău*, *Fițcău*, *Hagău*, *Hădărău*, *Hărțău*, *Laslău*, *Săcălău*, *Şugău*, *Tău*, *Tițcău*; Satu-Mare: *Bârsău*, *Bicău*, *Bocicău*, *Chisău*, *Istrău*, *Lipău*, *Orbău*, *Potău*, *Sanislău*, *Santău*, *Şirlău*; Sălaj: *Bârsău Mare*, *Dumuşlău*, *Gâldău*, *Guruslău*, *Inău*, *Tihău*, *Valcău de Jos/de Sus*, *Zalău*; Sibiu: *Şalcău*, *Tău*; Timiş: *Beregsău Mare*, *Beregsău Mic*, *Chizătău*.

One can easily notice the high concentration of localities in the north-west region, because the **-***ău* suffix is of Hungarian origin.

Because of many toponyms and hydronyms share the same name, we shall list some hydronyms formed with the same suffix, divided according to the hydrographic basin they belong to. Argeş: *Câlnău*, *Pălălău*; Bega-Timiş-Caraş: *Beregsău*, *Cherăstău*, *Igazău*, *Tău*; Crişuri: *Barcău*, *Beretău*, *Condratău*, *Cosmău*, *Fonău*, *Orbău*, *Santău*, *Serăstrău*, *Vărăsău*, *Vâlcău*, *Zugău*; Dunărea: *Almalău*, *Rău*; Ialomița: *Vărbilău*, *Vitnău*; Jiu: *Hodinău*; Mureş-Aranca: *Cergău*, *Cricău*, *Ditrău*, *Fierăstrău*, *Fițcău*, *Gârbău*, *Mirislău*, *Şicasău*, *Şugău*, *Tăstărău*, *Trascău*; Olt: *Dobârlău*, *Gherghelău*, *Hosăsău*, *Lisnău*, *Otăsău*, *Părău*; Prut: *Chisălău*, *Hărbărău*; Siret: *Asău*, *Barasău*, *Bolătău*, *Buzău*, *Caraclău*, *Caraslău*, *Călăsău*, *Câlnău*, *Chichirău*, *Cracău*, *Falcău*, *Giumalău*, *Herătău*, *Mandău*, *Motnău*,

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)

Palcău, *Pănătău*, *Răcătău*, *Rău*, *Sadău*, *Sugău*, *Tarcău*, *Tazlău*, *Tighitău*, *Tisău*, *Titilău*, *Țibău*, *Vițău*, *Zăbrătău*; Someş: *Bandău*, *Bârgău*, *Bârsău*, *Bicău*, *Cavaştău*, *Cicârlău*, *Gârbău*, *Guruşlău*, *Inău*, *Jirnău*, *Lipău*, *Măcău*, *Morău*, *Răcătău*, *Tarcău*, *Țiclău*, *Zalău*; Tisa Superioară: *Măcărlău*, *Sărăsău*, *Socolău*, *Şugău*.

As one can see, most of the names belong to the hydrographic basins of Transylvania. Although there are 29 water names (ended in *-ău*) in the Siret hydrographic basin, most of them flowing into the right-side of the river, they undoubtedly belong to the Transylvanian area. The hydronyms in the Olt basin, too, must be included in Transylvanian region. In the hydrographic basins of southern Romania, few watercourses names end in *-ău*, a situation similar to that of the toponyms. Thus, we can draw the following conclusion: this suffix can be found mainly in the north-west area of the country.

Studying the two lists, that of toponyms and that of the hydronyms, one can usually notice that many of them share the same name (see *Almălău*, *Asău*, *Bârgău*, *Beregsău*, *Bicău*, *Buzău*, *Câlnău*, *Cergău*, *Cricău*, *Dobârlău*, *Falcău*, *Gârbău*, *Lipău*, *Lisnău*, *Măcău*, *Orbău*, *Otăsău*, *Pănătău*, *Sadău*, *Sarasău*, *Şugău*, *Tarcău*, *Țibău*, *Vărbilău*, *Zăbrătău*, etc.), and sometimes they share the same name with the appelatives (see *Bolătău*, *Cergău*, *Ciurgău*, *Dâmbău*, *Gâlmău*, *Ghergheleu*, *Jirlău*, *Hârlău*, *Şirlău*, *Țicău*, etc.). As toponyms, they can come directly from the respective appelatives which belong to the entopic terminologic group (analysed above).

Consequently, the toponyms and the hydronyms (originated in a transonimization process) can share the same basis: the Romanian appelatives.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*** *Atlasul Cadastrului Apelor din Republica Populară Română*, Bucureşti, 1964.

*** *Indicatorul localităților din România*, Bucureşti, 1974.

Bolocan, Gheorghe (coord.), *Dicționarul invers al numelor de ape din România*, Craiova, Editura Universitaria, 2006.

Bolocan, Gheorghe (coord.), *Dicționarul invers al numelor de localități din România*, Craiova, Editura Universitaria, 2002.

Bolocan, Gheorghe, Şodolescu-Silvestru, Elena, *Dicționarul entopic al limbii române* (I), în SCO, 1/1995, p. 67-101.

Bolocan, Gheorghe, Şodolescu-Silvestru, Elena, *Dicționarul entopic al limbii române* (II), SCO, 1/1996, p. 179-241.

Kis, Emese, *Sufixul* -ău *în cuvintele de origine maghiară din limba română*, în CL, V, nr. 1-2/1960.

Porucic, T., *Lexiconul termenilor entopici în limba română*, Chişinău, 1931.

Tudose, Claudia, *Derivarea cu sufixe în româna populară*, Bucureşti, 1978.

BDD-A3781 © 2008 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-26 17:00:02 UTC)