Christian Imagery in Romanian Folk Plant Names

Ioan MILICĂ

L'analyse des noms populaires roumains des plantes, reflète l'existence d'un riche répertoire de termes qui montrent l'influence profonde du Christianisme. Une variété considérable de mots dérivés et composés ont à leur base des mots qui désignent des réalités de la vie religieuse. Parmi les sources d'appellation importantes il y a la Divinité, la Vierge, le Diable, les Saints, les fêtes religieuses, le clergé (les prêtres, les religieux). Les noms des plantes qui sont étroitement liés au trésor folklorique et qui justifie leur existence, les noms des plantes à résonance biblique et chrétienne révèlent l'importance et l'impact que la spiritualité et la civilisation chrétienne ont eu sur l'imaginaire collectif roumain.

L'intention de cet article est celle d'identifier et de décrire les motivations historiques, culturelles et spirituelles codés dans les noms d'ethnobotaniques qui ont circulé sous l'influence du christianisme. Le matériel lexical analysé a été prélevé des dictionnaires et des encyclopédies roumains de botanique populaire.

Mots-clés: ethnolinguistique, formation des mots, sources d'appellation, christianisme.

Preliminaries

The influence of religion upon the vocabulary of any historical human language is undisputed, since words, and, more specifically, names "may reveal crucial information about gender, kinship, geographical origin, or religion" (Bodenhorn & vom Bruck 2006: 4). In the great anthropological repository called language, the lexicon of common plant names proves an attractive field of scientific inquiry due to the complex issues that it poses.

One such issue is the influence of religious life upon the creation and circulation of plant names, both scientific and popular. According to Bejan (1991: 41), the most prominent domains in the lexicon of Romanian folk plant names are the superordinate domain of animals and birds followed by that of supernatural beings. The last one consists of two subordinate domains, namely lexical items referring to mythological beings, such as *zâne* (Engl. aprox. *fairies*), *zmei* (Engl. aprox. *dragons*), and the like, and the ones with Christian resonance, compiled with constituents such as *Dumnezeu* (Engl. God), *Iisus Hristos* (Engl. Jesus Christ), *Maica Domnului* (Engl. Mother of God) and so on. Moreover, without offering any statistical evidence,

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

Bejan claims that the most frequent constituent to be found in the plant names pertaining to the domain of supernatural beings is the Rom. *drac*[1] (Engl. *devil*), whereas constuents like Rom. *Maica Domnului* (Engl. *Mother of God*), *Sf. Maria* (Engl. *St. Mary*), *Maica Precista* (Engl. *The Holy Mother*) and *popă* (priest) play the leading role in the build-up of the Romanian plant name vocabulary with Christian resonance. The claim does not only support the presumption that the devil is the pervading entity of the supernatural being domain in the Romanian folk plant name lexicon but it also implies that Virgin Mary is highly revered not only in the Christian Orthodox Cruch but also in Romanian folklore since many folk plant names are related to this emblem. Such high-profile lexical constituents are not peculiar to the Romanian folk plant nomenclature. Instead, they feature in the plant name lexicons of many other languages. In fact, the names of the saints were so popular that even the botanical Latin, the language of the learned, featured many such honorary names. By the middle of the eighteenth century, in the works of Carl von Linné (Carol Linnaeus), the founding father of modern scientific biological nomenclature, the practice of attributing names of saints to plants was strongly discouraged and this was one of the signs that the scientific terminology was on its way towards gaining autonomy from the ancient naming practices.

"Generic names should not be misused to gain the favour, or preserve the memory, of saints, or of men famous in some other arts.", wrote Linnaeus in his *Philosophia Botanica*[2] (1751), thus reiterating a statement formulated in a previous work, *Critica Botanica*[3] (1737: 69), and supported with evidence found in a book published almost a century and a half before by the Swiss botanist Johann Bauhin, *De Plantis a' Divis Sanctis've Nomen Habentibus* (1591).

Even if many of Linnaeus' aphorisms on the scientific nomenclature of plants are currently outdated it is important to notice that for the intelligentsia of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries the reform in the practice of plant naming equated with a gradual discard of the traditional Medieval denominative habits. As Carl von Linné replaced such generic plant names as *Sanct. Tritinatis*, *Alberti*, *Antonii*, *Benedicti*, *Christophori*, *Gerardi*, *Georgii*, *Guilielmi*, *Johannis*, *Jacobi*, *Kunigundis*, *Ladislai*, *Laurentii*, *Pauli*, *Petri*, *Philippi*, *Quirini*, *Ruperti*, *Simeonis*, *Stephani*, *Valentini*, *Zachariae*, and others, with 'barbarian' names like *Hepatica*, *Erysimum*, *Geum*, *Actaea*, *Aegopodium*, *Valeriana*, *Agrimonia*, *Artemisia*, *Senecio*, *Eupatorium*, *Gentiana*, *Sanicula*, *Primula*, *Parietaria*, *Isatis*, *Tussilago*, *Geranium*, *Malva*, *Circaea*, *Paeonia*, *Centauria*[4] etc., the differences between the naïve (folk) and expert (scientific) denominative models became gradually clearer. While the terminology of natural sciences was being generalized and standardized, the folk lexicons of animals, plants and other entities of the natural world continued to remain

[1] See Bejan, 1991: 97.

[2] Linnaeus' *Philosophia Botanica* translated by Stephen Freer, Oxford University Press, 2003.

[3] "Nominibus genericis non abuti decet ad Sanctorum hominumque in alia arte Illustrium memoriam conservandam, vel favorem captandum."

[4] Linnaeus 1737: 71-72. See also Linnaeus 2003: 182-183.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

language and culture specific. Consequently, the plant names of Christian descent pertaining to the scientific nomenclature were replaced by technical, more descriptive names, whereas the common plant names honouring Christianity continued to make up a significant part of the folk lexicons.

It was no surprise that by the end of the nineteenth century, at a time when the scientific study of common botanical names led to the compilation of glossaries and dictionaries, English botanists like Britten and Holland noted a wealth of folk plant names with Biblical and Christian reference: "A great number of plant names may be called dedicatory, and embody the names of many Saints, and even of the Deity. The latter, however, are very few in numbers, owing perhaps to a sense of reverence: and *God Almighty's Bread and Cheese*; *God's Eye*; *God's Grace*; *God's Meat*; *Our Lord's*, or *Our Saviour's Flannel*; *Christ's Hair*; *Christ's Herb*; *Christ's Ladder*, *Christ's Thorn*, *Holy Ghost*, and *Herb Trinity* make up almost the whole list. Not so with the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom a great number are dedicated under the name of "Lady" or "Our Lady". A reference to the names under the word "Lady" in the Dictionary will show how very numerous these are. Several of the names connected with the Blessed Virgin Mary, as *Virgin Mary's Cowlips*, *Virgin Mary's Milkdrops*, *Mary's Tears*, *Virgin Mary's Pinch* perpetuate some charmingly interesting legends which will be found recorded under the various names.

Many other Saints have received a similar recognition; very often because the plants named after them come into flower about the time that their festivals are kept. (…).

Then the devil has come for a large share of plant nomenclature; and in a great majority of cases this has arisen, as one would naturally suppose, from some real or reputed bad qualities possessed by the plants which bear his name. Allied to these, perhaps, are the names, a tolerably numerous class, in which the words "Fairy" and "Witch" enter." (Britten and Holland, 1886: xvii-xviii).

In a similar vein, in his treatise on plant lore, Folkard (1892) devoted entire chapters to the 'plants of the Christian Church' and the 'plants of the Devil'. He also pointed out the intricate heathen and Christian symbolism attributed to a large number of plants.

On a more general note, the assumption that some of the common as well as the scientific plant names have indeniable mythological and religious denominative bases has been proven by the works of such scientists as A. de Gubernatis (1878, 1882) or Peter Bernhardt (2008). Nevertheless, the role played by various folkloric productions like enchantments, fables, jokes, legends, poems, proverbs, riddles, stories, superstitions and tales in the naming of plants is less clear, although interesting and meritorious efforts to address the issue have been made (Thiselton-Dyer 1889, Folkard, 1892, Florea Marian, 2008, 2010). The clear cut observation that can be formulated when considering that vast historical and cultural landscape surrounding the naming of plants is that plant names undergo significant changes over time due to a complex ensemble of linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

Returning to the issue of the folk plant names that mirror the profound influence of Christianity, the long-standing and widespread tradition of naming plants in connection with the Bible and the Christian religion ultimately led to the creation of a large plant nomenclature, mostly popular, as proven by the numerous dictionaries of plant names. Britten and Holland (1886: xvii-xviii) conclude that many "of these names are (…) transferred from heathen deities to Christian saints; others, however, are directly Christian in origin." Their statement reveals the consequences of two major processes engaged in act of naming the plants. On the one hand, we need to assume that across the world many plants owe their names to the fact that Christianity suppressed or overlapped all sorts of linguistic and cultural practices perceived as pagan and these ample processes of change or transition might have sunk into oblivion a sizeable number of folk plant names. On the other hand, it is not wrong to presume, following Britten & Holland, that certain unknown plants were at a certain point in time baptized with Christian names.

The extraordinary variety of plant names makes it extremely difficult to find out exactly which plants received a Christian name that rivaled and/or finally made extinct a previous name and which plants had an exclusive Christian baptism. In many natural languages if not in all of them, any plant known to man can bear more than one folk name and, in the absence of credible and thorough evidence to support the claim that a formerly unknown plant received its name under the strict and direct influence of Christianity, the efforts to discern under which conditions the act of naming took place remain mostly unrewarded. Furthermore, notorious traps that the researcher may fall into when studying the history of plant names are such linguistic phenomena as the folk etymology, the hypercorrection and, of course, the language calques. Because of the shortcomings and the perils that may endanger the research a cautious course of scientific investigation is advised.

Scientific botanical nomenclature proves an adequate field to search for names of Christian descent, despite the danger of following the path that leads to finding a scientific name based on a folk name. Since the expert denominative model explicitly turned away from the naive tradition of attributing names with Christian resonance, only a few types of scientific plant names can be put under scrutiny. *Geographical names* and *commemorative names*[5] fall into the category and one has to take into account the recommendations of *The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* (quoted in Stearn 1983: 295): "A prefix to a surname indicating ennoblement or canonization should be omitted, e.g. *candollei* after De Candolle, *jussieui* after De Jussieu, *hilairei* after Sainte-Hillaire, *remyi* after St. Rémy; in geographical epithets, however, 'St.' is rendered as sanctus (m.) or sancta (f.) e.g. *sancti-johannis*, of St. John, *sanctae-helenae*, of St. Helena".

In the practice of scientific plant naming, both geographical names and commemorative names are widely employed to identify various genera and species of plants, but, according to *The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*, only

[5] Defined as names given "in honour of a notable person" (Gledhill 2008: 23), commemorative names are also known as honorary names (Lemmon 1878).

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

geographical names may preserve specifications of Christian resonance. Therefore, if someone is interested in tracing the Christian descent of some scientific plant names, the research of geographical names might prove rewarding. Following Stearn (1983: 206), "geographical names used in botanical Latin may be divided historically into three groups corresponding to their period of origin": (1) those used by the Romans themselves, (2) those coined during the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century for legal or academic purposes and (3) those of modern origin.

It is a well-known fact that, since the Middle Ages, many geographical names have been attributed to honour the Deity, the Mother of God or the Saints, and, consequently, one is to expect that various plants found in the respective areas bear the name of their natural habitat. In other words, some plant names (phytonyms), both scientific and common, are rooted in geographical names (toponyms). For instance, the *Sanctambrosia* Skottsb.[6] genus of plants found on the San Ambrosio Isle, one of the four islands of the small Chilean archipelago called The Desventuradas, conventionalizes a folk-etymology. Originally, the name of the isle was St. Nabor (San Ambor) but the name become confused with that of St. Ambrose of Milan (San Ambrosio), one of the influential Christian figures of the fourth century. In this case, we witness the scientific formalization of a folk etymology, even if the geographical name clearly indicates a Christian denominative source, i.e. the names of Saints. In contrast, a scientific phytonym like *Festuca sanctae-mathae*[7] preserves in its specific epithet the Columbian toponym *Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta* and, as such, could be considered a plant name of direct Christian descent, since the name of a saint is used to designate a place and then a plant living in that place.

Another example taken from the thesaurus of common botanical names offers a better understanding on the difficulties that need to be overcome in order to trace the influence of Christianity upon the names of plants. According to Lindsay (1923: 39), the *Judas tree* (Cercis siliquastrum) commonly owes its folk name to the belief that "this is the tree on which Judas hanged himself, because the red flower-buds, coming before the leaves, looked like drops of blood.". Watts (2007: 215) also notes that in the popular imagination "the purple-rose flowers tell how the tree burned with shame when Judas hanged himself on it". Following the same author, this belief is originally a Greek tradition that was passed on along with the naturalization of the tree in Western Europe. In its journey towards the West, the plant whose land of origin is Southern Europe and Western Asia received a Latin name, *arbor Judae* which, in turn, gave rise to linguistic confusion and fuelled people's imagination (cf. Rolland 1903/IV: 79). As the French loan translation[8] *arbre de Judée* competed against *arbre de Judas*[9], the tree passed from France to England and it was probably

[6] Quattrocchi 2000/IV: 2376.
[7] Quattrocchi 2006/II: 954.
[8] Crystal, 2008: 64.
[9] "Le mot *Judée* au lieu de *Judas* vient de la terminaison du génitif *Judae* sonnant à l'oreille des ignorants" (Rolland 1903/IV: 79).

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

during Shakespeare's time that the plant became known as *Judas tree* (Watts 2006: 215). It is then adequate to assume that a Christian legend with Biblical resonance motivates the European plethora of common names given according to the popular lore: Germ. *Judasbaum*, It. *albero di Giuda*, Rom. *arborele Iudei*, Rus. *Iudino derevo*, Sp. *árbol de Judas*.

In the light of the above-made considerations, the following description of the folk Romanian plant names with Christian resonance makes use of the notion of IMAGERY here largely understood as the figurative, yet conventional lexicalization of historical and cultural representations. As vague as it may sound, this provisional working definition is meant to point out that language is a cultural mirror and the very medium of culture dynamics. Understanding language as a great cultural repository helps us notice the importance of both language-internal and extralinguistic factors in the shaping of reference and meaning, since, in our view, phytonyms, zoonyms or toponyms are among the prime examples to support the cultural dimension of language.

The Romanian folk plant names discussed below are considered by taking into account two aspects, namely the main word-formation processes that build up the common botanical lexicon and the dominant spheres of Christian imagery reflected by it. Of special interest for the present description is the structure of compounds in that the constituents reveal the source-domains blended in the linguistic encoding.

Word-formation

Any empirical research of the Romanian ethnobotanical dictionaries and encyclopedias (Borza 1968, Drăgulescu 2010, Florea Marian, 2008-2010, Panțu 1906, Pârvu 2002-2005) shows that the most productive word-formation processes are derivation and compounding. The two major formative mechanisms indicate the basic types of common plant names: *simple (synthetic) names*, consisting of one word, and *complex (analytic) names*, with two or more lexical constituents. In contrast with the folk botanical lexicon, the scientific plant nomenclature is exclusively *analytic*; unlike the common name, the scientific denomination includes a *generic name* that designates the genera, and a *specific epithet*, that designates the species.

Derivation

The suffixation is the most effective of all affixations and the derivatives counting as plant names[10] usually refer to: 1) the general aspect of the plant or of one of its parts: *ghimpoasă*[11] (Arcticum lappa); 2) the colour of the plant or of one of its parts: *albăstrică*[12] (Aster tripolium); 3) the taste or the smell of the plant or of one of its parts: *dulcișor*[13] (Hedysarum grandiflorum); *mirodele*[14] (Diplotaxis tenuifolia); 4) the

[10] The derivatives discussed in this paper can be divided into derivatives specifically created to designate plants and derivatives that name other realities as well.

[11] Drăgulescu, 2010: 285. Rom. *ghimpoasă* < Rom. *ghimpe* (Engl. thistle) + suf. *–oasă*.

[12] Drăgulescu, 2010: 32. Rom *albăstrică* is a diminutive of Rom. *albastră*, the feminine form of *albastru* (blue).

[13] Drăgulescu, 2010: 238. Rom. *dulcișor* < Rom. *dulce* (Engl. sweet) + suf. *–işor*.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

"behaviour" of the plant: *somnişor*[15] (Calamintha clinopodium); 5) the properties of the sap: *lăptic*[16] (Euphorbia cyparissias); 6) the use of the plant, with the following subtypes: a) therapeutic: *negelariţă*[17] (Chelidonium majus); b) magic: *drăgostiţă*[18] (Sedum maximum); c) ornamental: *bucuriţă*[19] (Euphrasia stricta); d) practical: *măturişcă*[20] (Artemisia annua); 7) the place: a) of growth: *băltăţele*[21] (Ranunculus acris); b) of the supposed origin: *turcoaice*[22] (Zinnia elegans); 8) the time of growth, with the following subtypes: a) the moment of the day: *zorele*[23] (Convolvulus arvensis); b) the season: *primăveriţă*[24] (Galanthus nivalis); c) the holy days: *crăciunele*[25] (Euphorbia pulcherrima).

Nevertheless, the vast repertoire of the domains that underlie the denominative bases of folk plant names consists of a larger typology that ultimately reveals the anthropological roots of the naïve (folk) botanical lexicon:

- celestial bodies: *steluţă*[26] (Aster alpinus); *soreancă*[27] (Heliantus annuus);
- supernatural beings and deities: *zmeoaică*[28] (Laserpitium archangelica);
- body parts: *limbariţă*[29] (Alisma plantago-aquatica);
- animals: *vulpoi*[30] (Sorghum halepense);

---

[14] Drăgulescu, 2010: 407. Rom *mirodele* < Rom. *mirodie*, an obsolete word of Greek origin, most likely borrowed from Bulgarian, initially used to refer to the *parsley*, and then, by extension, to any type of aromatic plant.

[15] Drăgulescu, 2010: 575. Rom. *somnişor* is the a derivative of *somn* (*sleep*).

[16] Drăgulescu, 2010: 348. Rom. *lăptic* is the diminutive of *lapte* (*milk*). The name of plant designates the whiteness of the sap.

[17] Drăgulescu, 2010: 428. The plant was used in the treatment against warts (verrucas).

[18] Drăgulescu, 2010: 236. Rom. *drăgostiţă* is a derivative of the Rom. *dragoste* (love), thus indicating that the plant was used in love charmes.

[19] Drăgulescu, 2010: 97. Literally "little joys".

[20] Drăgulescu, 2010: 394. Rom. *măturişcă* < Rom. *măturǎ* (Engl. *broom*) + suf. *-işcă*. The English plant name is *sweet wormwood*.

[21] Drăgulescu, 2010: 60. Rom *baltă* means 'marsh', 'pond'. The common botanical name denotes that the plant grows in the marshes.

[22] Drăgulescu, 2010: 628. Literally "Turkish (lady)".

[23] Drăgulescu, 2010: 670. The Romanian common name suggests that the flowers open at dawn. One common English name is *bindweed*.

[24] Drăgulescu, 2010: 507. The Romanian folk name reveals that the flower appears in spring (Rom. *primăvară*). The English common name is *snowdrop*.

[25] Drăgulescu, 2010: 208. The Romanian common name indicates that the plant reaches maturity around Christmas time (Rom. *Crăciun*).

[26] Drăgulescu, 2010: 587. Rom *steluţă* < Rom. *stea* (Engl. star) + suf. *–uţă*. The plant owes its name to the resemblance of the inflorescence with a star. The diminutival suffix suggests the small size of the plant.

[27] Drăgulescu, 2010: 576. The name, derived from the Rom. *soare* (sun), encodes the plant's ability to face the sun during the day (heliotropism).

[28] Drăgulescu, 2010: 669.

[29] Drăgulescu, 2010: 357. Rom. *limbariţă* < Rom. *limbă* (Engl. tongue) + suf. *–ariţă*. The name unveils that the plant has tongue-like leaves.

[30] Drăgulescu, 2010: 663. The metafor originating in the Romanian name for the male fox is obscure and it may indicate that the plant grows in the animal's habitat. Another hypothesis links the plant's impact on the habitat with the predatory behaviour of the fox.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

- birds: *vulturică*[31] (Hieracium aurantiacum);
- insects: *puricică*[32] (Polygonum persicaria);
- other plants: *grâuşor*[33] (Ranunculus ficaria);
- clothing and ornaments: *cerceluț*[34] (Fuchsia coccinea);
- food: *plăcințele*[35] (Trollius europaeus); *untişor*[36] (Taraxacum officinale);
- objects of practical use: *găletuși*[37] (Aquilegia vulgaris); *punguliță*[38] (Capsella bursa-pastoris);
- money: *bănucei*, *bănuței*, *bănuțele*[39], *părăluțe*[40] (Bellis perennis);
- social relationships: *uncheşel*[41] (Nigella damascena);
- ethnic groups: *țigănuțe*[42] (Tagetes patula).

Far from being complete, the enumeration that sketches the repertoire of the domains by means of which the naïve botanical lexicon is structured also includes the folk plant names with Christian resonance. The Christian imagery preserved by various common botanical names should to be discussed in relation to the folkloric treasury of myths, legends apocrypha, and other symbolic narratives that within the traditional life of any Christian community usually go along with the religious doctrine and the ecclesiastical rites.

A brief survey of the denominative categories that unveil the Christian and Biblical imagery allows for the identification of lexical derivatives referring to:

- *Biblical figures*: Rom. *adamască*[43] (Ajuga laxmannii) < *Adam* + suf. *–ească* is a lexical creation probably modeled after *avrămească*[44] (Ajuga laxmannii); the second

[31] Drăgulescu, 2010: 663. Rom. *vulturică* < Rom. *vultur* (Engl. eagle) + suf. *– ică*. The common botanical name probably rests on the belief that birds of prey such as the eagle or the hawk consume the plant's latex to enhance their sight.

[32] Drăgulescu, 2010: 514. Rom *puricică* < Rom. *purice* (Engl. flea) + suf. *–ică*. The name suggests that the plant is used as a repellent against fleas.

[33] Drăgulescu, 2010: 297. Rom *grâușor* < Rom. *grâu* (Engl. wheat) + suf. *–uşor*. The plant's name reveals the resemblance with the cereal.

[34] Drăgulescu, 2010: 154. Rom. *cerceluț* < Rom. *cercel* (Engl. earring) + suf. *–uț*. The common plant name uncovers a metaphor based on the resemblance of the inflorescence with the earrings.

[35] Drăgulescu, 2010: 488. The feminine, plural form *plăcințele* is derived from Rom. *plăcintă* (Engl. pie) and it alludes to the shape of leaves.

[36] Drăgulescu (2010: 637-638) states that according to the popular belief, if the domestic herbivores eat the plant they will produce a fatter milk needed to prepare diary products like cheese and butter.

[37] Drăgulescu, 2010: 276. The folk name rests on the similarity between the inflorescence of the plant and the bucket, an object of daily use in the peasant household.

[38] Drăgulescu, 2010: 513. One of the English common names is *shepherd's purse*. The ethnobotanical name is also encoded in the specific epithet of the scientific name.

[39] Drăgulescu, 2010: 62. In Romanian, the stem *ban* means 'coin', 'money'.

[40] Drăgulescu, 2010: 463. The plethora of Romanian folk plant names referring to the round shape of coins uncovers either the shape of the flowers or of the leaves.

[41] Drăgulescu, 2010: 636. Rom *uncheșel* < Rom. reg. *uncheș* (Engl. old man) + suf. *–el*. The common name is proably due to the vague resemblance of the bud with the head of an old man.

[42] Drăgulescu, 2010: 634. As the name shows, this flowering plant is metaphorically associated with the vividly coloured clothes and the behaviour of gipsies.

[43] Drăgulescu, 2010: 26.

[44] Drăgulescu, 2010: 50.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

plant name is based, according to Drăgulescu, on a folk etymology that involves the name of the Biblical patriarch *Avram* (Abraham). Another folk name, *barba-boierului*[45], is more suggestive in indicating the possbile metaphorical link between the long white beards of the holly figures depicted on the walls of the churches and the inflorescence of the plant. In the Romanian folkclore, Adam, usually referred to as *Moș Adam* (Old Adam), has a rich network of representations (cf. Pamfile 2008/I). The same thing can be said about the Biblical *Avram* and the vegetal symbolism of the plant named *avrămească* (cf. Tocilescu & Țapu, 1980/I: 154, 350; III: 89, 151 etc.).

- *celestial beings*: Rom. *îngeraș*[46] (Begonia rex) < Rom. *înger* (Engl. angel) + suf. *–aș* designates a plant that probably owes its name to the resemblance that popular imagination created between the angels' wings and the plant's leaves. In the scientific nomenclature, the generic name *Angelica* rests on the Latin form *herba angelica* and it is suggestive of the belief that the plant is deemed to have medicinal properties (Quattrocchi, 2000/I: 141).

- *the devil*: The Romanian word *drac* gave birth to a prolific ethnobotanical terminology consisting of derivatives like *dracă*[47] (Paliurus spina-christi, Xantium spinosum), *drăcoaică* (Paliurus spina-christi), *drăcușor*[48] (Anthurus archeri) and many compounds of which illustrative examples will be discussed below.

- *the Virgin Mary*: Very few examples of derivatives illustrate the reverence towards the Mother of God. One typical example is *mărioare*[49] (Callistephus chinensis) < *Maria* + suf. *–ioară*. The common phytonym indicates that the plant flowers around St. Mary's Day (15th of August). Given the significant amount of folkloric creations that honour the Virgin Mary and her deeds (Pamfile 2008, Niculiță-Voronca 2008) as well as the large number of compound plant names, it should be considered among the central domains that testify the influence of Christianity upon the Romanian plant lexicon.

- *the Saints*: In the Romanian folklore, several saints are extremely prominent due to a complexity of factors of which the most important is the superseding of the Christian festivals over older agricultural and magical rites, as it happens with St. George's Day (23rd of April) which fairly coincides with the middle of astronomical spring and with the time of plant sowing, and St. Dimitri's Day (26th of October), which coincides with the middle of autumn and with the end of harvesting. Other saints, such as St. Peter and St. Paul, are considered the key keepers of the gates of heaven. According to a widespread popular belief, on St. John's Day (24th of June), the skies open and all the living creatures can speak. The day of the summer solstice is also associated with many superstitions, magical practices and rituals. St. Elijah, celebrated on the 20th of July, is of particular importance in the Romanian mythology

[45] Literally, the boyar's beard.
[46] Drăgulescu, 2010: 339.
[47] Drăgulescu, 2010: 234.
[48] Drăgulescu, 2010: 235.
[49] Drăgulescu, 2010: 389.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

and folklore[50]. Consequently, quite a few folk plant names are derived from the names of saints, since they reach maturity around the times when the respective saints are celebrated. Such is the case of the Romanian folk plant names like *dumitriță*[51] (Aster salingnus, Begonia semperflorens, Sedum sieboldii) < (Sf.) *Dumitru* (St. Dimitri) + suf. *–iță*, *georgițe*[52] (Convallaria majalis) < (Sf.) *George* (St. George) + suf. *–iță*, *sângiorgel*[53] (Pulmonaria angustifolia, Pulmonaria officinalis) < *Sângeorgiu* (St. George) + suf. *–el* or *petreancă*[54] (Asclepias syriaca, Heliosperma quadrifidum) < (Sf.) *Petru* (St. Peter) + suf. *-eancă*]. Other common botanical names like *cristoforiță* (Actaea spicata) < (Sf.) Cristofor (St. Christopher) + suf. *–iță* are motivated by the belief that the saint blessed the plant to offer protection against terrible epidemic diseases like the plague. Sometimes, such largely embraced beliefs led to rich international lexicalizations. According to Rolland (1896/I: 129-130), most European languages designate Actaea spicata as 'St. Christopher's herb'.

- *the Holy Days*: Within Christian communities a special importance is devoted to major holy days such as the birth or the ressurection of Christ. The plants that reach maturity during these times are named after such significant events. Therefore, Romanian derivatives like *crăciunele*[55] (Bergenia lingulata, Rhipsalis pachyptera) < *Crăciun* (Christmas) + suf. *–ele*, *păștele*[56] (Anemone nemorosa) < Paște (Easter) + suf. *– ele* point out the cultural motivation of many folk plant names.

- *ecclesiastic and monastic figures*: Men and women of the cloth have always been under the scrutiny of laymen. In the Romanian folkloric literature[57], characters like *popa* (the priest), *călugărul* (the monk), *călugărița* (the nun) are very popular and one is to expect that their prominence must be reflected in various folk terminologies too. Romanian derivatives like *călugărei* (Erythronium dens-canis) < *călugăr* (Engl. monk) + suf. *–el*, *călugărași* (Knautia arvensis) < (Engl. monk) + suf. *–aș*, *călugărișoară*[58] (Succisa pratensis) < *călugăr* (Engl. monk) + suf. *-ișoară* confirm the hypothesis.

- *objects of religious use*: Due to the paramount role played by the church in the lives of Christians, various ethnobotanical derivatives are based on words referring to ecclesiastical objects: *candeluță*[59] (Aquilegia vulgaris) < *candelă* (Engl. lamp) + suf. *–uță*, *prescuriță*[60] (Sempervivum soboliferum) < *prescură* (Engl. prosphora) + suf. *–iță*.

[50] See details in Pamfile 2008, Niculiță-Voronca 2008.
[51] Drăgulescu, 2010: 239.
[52] Drăgulescu, 2010: 281.
[53] Drăgulescu, 2010: 552.
[54] Drăgulescu, 2010: 478.
[55] Drăgulescu, 2010: 208.
[56] Drăgulescu, 2010: 467.
[57] See, for instance, Tocilescu & Țapu 1980.
[58] Drăgulescu, 2010: 140.
[59] Drăgulescu, 2010: 128.
[60] Drăgulescu, 2010: 506.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

Of all the categories mentioned above, the most prominent seem to be those of plant names derived from the names of saints and holy days. One might even contend that the Christian calendar is a prototypical denominative source in the creation of folk plant names, since a fundamental empirical feature encoded in folk phytonyms is the time when the plants appear or reach maturity. In fact, lexical series such as *dumitraș* (Aster novae-angliae), *dumitrici*, *dimitrițe* (Chrysanthemum indicum), *dumitrie* (Sedum sieboldii) and *dumitriță*[61] (Aster salingnus, Begonia semperflorens, Sedum sieboldii) reflect both the cultural prestige attributed by tradition to St. Dimitri and the ethnolinguistic richness associated with the martyr saint and his day. Furthermore, holy days of crucial importance such as Christmas gave rise to a potent lexical family of common plant names - *crăciun* (Begonia metalica, Phyllocactus ackermannii), *crăciunăreasă*, *crăciunărică* (Epiphyllum truncatum), *crăciunel* (Bergenia crassifolia, Epiphyllum truncatum, Phyllocactus ackermannii, Rhipsalis crispata), *crăciunele* (Bergenia lingulata, Rhipsalis pachyptera), *crăciuniță* (Begonia semperflorens, Bergenia crassifolia, Bergenia lingulata, Epiphyllum truncatum), *crăciunească* (Epiphyllum truncatum, Phyllocactus ackermannii), *crăciuneasca*[62] (Epiphyllum truncatum) – with deep religious and folkloric roots.

Compounding

In terms of word-formation, the linguistic diversity of plant names makes it possible for the researcher to identity virtually any type of compounding. Nevertheless, the types of compounds are not evenly represented in the common botanical lexicon, and this observation brings forth the need to draw the distinction between dominant (central) and lesser (marginal) compounding types. According to Bejan (1991: 220 ff), in the Romanian ethnobotanical lexicon, the paratactic compounds made up of lexical constituents linked by juxtaposition or coordination are rarer in comparison to the hypotactic compounds built up with lexical constituents linked by subordination. By stating that the hypotactic compounds form the majority of the Romanian plant terminology it is important to note that only few types are quantitatively dominant. As far as the domain of Romanian folk plant names with Christian resonance is concerned, the following types of hypotactic compounding are well represented in the ethnobotanical dictionaries and encyclopedias:

A) *Accusatival subordination*, consisting of two main patterns, namely [Noun + Preposition + Noun] and [Noun + Adjective];

B) *Genitival subordination*, also consisting of two main patterns, specifically [Noun + Proper Name] and [Noun + Noun].

The first Accusatival formative pattern, [Noun + Preposition + Noun] is represented by compounds in which the subordinated constituents usually indicate

[61] Drăgulescu, 2010: 239.
[62] Drăgulescu, 2010: 208.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

the TIME when the plant reaches maturity: *cireș de Ispas*[63] (Cerasus avium var. juliana), *floare de Paști*[64] (Anenome nemorosa), *rujă de Rusalii*[65] (Paeonia officinalis). Roughly the same can be said about the compounds formed according to the second pattern [Noun + Adjective], since the determiners mainly indicate either the TIME of reaching maturity: *mere sânioneşti*[66], *mere sântilieşti*[67], *pere sânpetreşti*[68], *pere sântămăreşti*[69] or the PLACE of growth: *busuioc mânăstiresc*[70] (Dracocephalum moldavicum), *garoafă călugărească*[71] (Dianthus chartusianorum). Other compounds of this type linguistically encode aditional references to SMELL: *lemn sfânt*[72] (Santolina chamaecyparissus), SIZE and SHAPE: *clopot mânăstiresc*[73] (Campanula persicifolia).

Of particular interest for the study of the Christian imagery preserved in common plant names are marginal compounds like *treizeci-de-arginți*[74] (Lunaria annua) or *curelele de opinci ale Domnului Hristos*[75] (Triglochin palustre) not only because they reflect the existence of unsual or complex formative patterns but also because they are beautiful metaphors that mirror the people's visions towards BIBLICAL or LEGENDARY EVENTS.

If we turn our attention towards the main Genitival patterns of the Romanian ethnobotanical compounds with Christian resonance, an important finding is that they can be classified according to the same categories displayed by the derivatives.

---

[63] Borza, 1968: 221. In the Romanian Orthodox calendar, The Ascension of Jesus, known as *Înălțarea* (*Domnului*) or *Ispasul*, is celebrated on the 40th day after Easter.

[64] Borza, 1968: 233.

[65] Bejan, 1991: 139. In the Romanian Orthodox calendar, the descent of the Holy Ghost is celebrated fifty days after Easter; the common name of this Christian festival is *Rusalii*.

[66] Drăgulescu, 2010: 386. This variety of apples is commonly called *mere sânioineşti* because it ripes around St. John's Day (the 24th of June).

[67] Bejan, 1991: 207. This variety of apples is commonly called *mere sântilieşti* because it ripes around St. Elijah's Day (the 20th of July).

[68] Drăgulescu, 2010: 462. This variety of pears is commonly called *pere sânpetreşti* because it ripes around St. Peter and Paul's Day (the 29th of June).

[69] Bejan, 1991: 207. This variety of pears is commonly called *pere sântămăreşti* because it ripes around St. Mary's Day (the 15th of August).

[70] Borza 1986: 214. The name suggests that the plant is cultivated in the gardens of the monasteries.

[71] Borza 1986: 237. The lexicographer also indicates that the Romanian folk name is probably a loan translation of the Germ. *Kartäusernelke*, a flowering plant cultivated in the monastic gardens.

[72] Borza, 1968: 250. Drăgulescu, 2010: 351 assumes that the Romanian folk name is a loan translation of the Germ. *Heiliges Pochholz*, which, in turn, is a calque of the scientific name (*Santolina*). He also states that the determiner *sfânt* most likely suggests the pleasant smell of the plant. Quattrocchi (2000/IV: 2380) explains that the scientific name *Santolina* is rooted in the Latin *santolina*, a corruption of the Lat. *santonina* which refers to the ancient Gaulic tribe of Santoni/ Santones.

[73] Borza, 1968: 222. Drăgulescu, 2010: 181 writes that the folk name encodes both the shape and the size of the plant's flowers imagistically equated with the great monastery bells.

[74] Bejan, 1991: 113. Drăgulescu, 2010: 621 insists upon the idea that in the collective imagery of the Romanians the fruits of the plant resemble the shape and the size of the thirty silver coins received by Judah as reward for his betrayal of Jesus.

[75] Borza, 1968: 228. Drăgulescu, 2010: 224 signals the existence of a Romanian botanical legend that explains how the latches of Christ's footware turned into the leaves of the plant.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

The plant names following the formative pattern [Noun + Proper Noun] usually include lexical constituents referring to:

- *the Deity*: *cămașa-Domnului*[76] (Convolvulus arvensis); *ciucurele-Domnului*[77] (Adenostyles alliariae); *coroana-lui-Hristos*[78] (Passiflora coerulea); *floarea-Domnului*[79] (Aconitum napellus, Delphinium elatum); *iarba-lui-Dumnezeu*[80] (Artemisia arboratum); *inima-Domnului*[81] (Dicentra spectabilis), *lacrimile-lui-Christos*[82] (Briza media, Dicentra spectabilis); *lumânarea-Domnului*[83] (Verbascum phlomoides); *mila-Domnului*[84] (Ajuga laxmannii); *mușcata-lui-Christos*[85] (Chrysanthemum parthenium); *ochiul-lui-Christos*[86] (Aster alpinus); *pâinea-lui-Dumnezeu*[87] (Lactarius deliciosus); *papucul-Domnului*[88] (Cypripedium calceolus); *rugul-lui-Dumnezeu*[89] (a species of Rosa); *săgeata-lui-Dumnezeu*[90] (Orobanche spp.); *scaunul-Domnului*[91] (Phlox paniculatus) etc. Extremely suggestive for the

[76] Borza, 1968: 217. Literally: *the Lord's shirt*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 140 notes that the plant name is explained by a botanical legend according to which the Lord put his shirt on the plants to dry up, but the clothing shrank and become the plant's flower.

[77] Bejan, 1991: 112. Literally: *the Lord's tuft*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 172 comments that the inflorescence of the plant resembles the tufts.

[78] Borza, 1968: 225. Literally: *the crown of Christ*. In the folk imagination the form of the petals resembles the crown of thorns worn by Jesus throughout His Passion while the pistils are like the nails used to crucify the Saviour (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 202). Following Quattrocchi (2000/III: 1974) the folk imagery is also encoded in the generic scientific name: *Passiflora* < Lat. *passio*, -nis ('to suffer'). The "flowers symbolize the passion and crucifixion of Jesus Christ".

[79] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *the Lord's flower*. The plant is very toxic.

[80] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *the herb of the Lord*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 317 infers that the plant owes its metaphorical name to the pleasant smell.

[81] Borza, 1968: 249. Literally: the *Lord's heart*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 334, the plant has beautiful heart-shaped flowers.

[82] Borza, 1968: 249. Literally: *the tears of Christ*. The ethnobotanical name figuratively reflects Christ's suffering (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 345).

[83] Borza, 1968: 253. Literally: *the Lord's candle*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 364 assumes that the candle-shaped plant is deemed to be of divine origin.

[84] Borza, 1968: 259. Literally: *the Lord's mercy*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 404, the folk name of the plant is a loan translation after the scientific name Gratiola (officinalis), which, in turn, is the codification of the latin Medieval botanical name *gratia Dei*. Because the medicinal plant Gratiola officinalis is rather similar to Ajuga laxmannii, the name of the first plant was also attributed to the second.

[85] Borza, 1968: 262. Literally: *the geranium of Christ*.

[86] Borza, 1968: 265. Literally: *the eye of Christ*. The flower resembles an eye.

[87] Bejan, 1991: 111. Literally: *the bread of God*. Parts of the plant are edible.

[88] Borza, 1968: 268. Literally: *the Lord's slipper*. Due to its size and shape, the beautiful flower of the plant resembles a slipper worn, in the people's vivid imagery, either by a lady or God/ the Mother of God (Drăgulescu, 2010: 450).

[89] Bejan, 1991: 141. Literally: *the shrub of the Lord*.

[90] Bejan, 1991: 114. Literally: *the arrow of God*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 547 presumes that the folk name encodes the healing properties of the plant when used against the affection commonly known as *săgetătură* (Engl. twinge).

[91] Bejan, 1991: 109. Literally: *the Lord's chair*. In the collective imagination, the leaves of the plant are the chairs of supernatural beings, either pagan or Christian (Drăgulescu, 2010: 556).

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

complex connections created between the objective features of the plants and their subjective cultural attributes is the name *floarea Sfintei Treimi*[92] (Viola tricolor).

- *the Virgin Mary*: *acoperământul-Maicii*[93] (Ficus carica); *brâul-Maicii-Domnului*[94] (Phalaris arundinacea); *cămașa-Maicii-Domnului*[95] (Convolvulus arvensis); *ciucurele-Maicii-Domnului*[96] (Adenostyles alliariae); *dorul-Maicii-Precista*[97] (Asplenium trichomanes); *floarea-Sf.-Mării*[98] (Aster novae-angliae); *iarba- Sf.-Mării*[99] (Hierochloe australis); *inima-Maicii-Domnului*[100] (Dicentra spectabilis); *izma-Maicii-Precista*[101] (Tanacetum balsamita); *lacrimile-Maicii-Domnului*[102] (Coix lacryma-jobi); *lemnul-Maicii-Domnului*[103] (Artemisia annua, Santolina chamaecyparissus); *lingura-Maicii-Domnului*[104] (Cochlearia officinalis); *mâna-Maicii-Domnului*[105] (Anastatica hierochuntica); *mătura-Maicii-Precista*[106] (Artemisia annua); *papucul-Maicii-Domnului*[107] (Cypripedium calceolus); *păhărelul-*

[92] Drăgulescu, 2010: 260. The author mentions both the existence of a botanical legend that explains the folk name of the beautifully tricoloured flowers and the international series of ethnobotanical names from other European languages.

[93] Borza, 1968: 201. Literally: *the Mother's canopy*. This Mediterranean tree with great Biblical resonance (Musselman 2012: 55) owes its Romanian folk name to the large crown that is deemed similar to the head covering of the Virgin Mary (Drăgulescu, 2010: 26).

[94] Borza, 1968: 209. Literally: *the Mother of God's belt*. The long, narrow leaves with white ornaments are prototypical for considering the plant a belt (Drăgulescu, 2010: 89).

[95] Borza, 1968: 217. Literally: *the Mother of God's chemise*. See *cămașa-Domnului*.

[96] Borza, 1968: 221. Literally: *the Mother of God's tuft*. See *ciucurele-Domnului*.

[97] Borza, 1968: 229. Literally: *the Virgin Mother's longing*. The folk name is considered by Drăgulescu, 2010: 233 a corruption of *părul-Maicii-Precista*.

[98] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *St. Mary's flower*. The flowering plant owes its folk name to the blossoming period, i.e. around St. Mary's Birth Day (the 8th of September). See Drăgulescu, 2010: 260.

[99] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *St. Mary's herb*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 321 considers that the ethnobotanical name is motivated by the pleasant smell of the plant. Quattrocchi (2006/II:1041) considers the scientific name of the genus to be the codification of a folk conceptualization, 'sacred grass': *Hierochloe* < Greek hyeros 'sacred' + chloe 'grass'. Both name types, scientific and common, refer to "its use in religious ceremonies, fragrant and strewn before church doors and floors on holy festivals." (Quattrocchi 2006/II: 1041).

[100] Borza, 1968: 247. Literally: *the Mother of God's heart*. See *inima-Domnului*.

[101] Borza, 1968: 248. Literally: *the Virgin Mother's mint*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 337 argues that the pleasant smell motivates the plant's name. The plethora of the European folk names with the same structure is of Medieval origin: herba Divae Mariae.

[102] Borza, 1968: 249. Literally: *the Mother of God's tears*. Quattrocchi (2000/I: 579) observes that the scientific names of the species, *lacryma-jobi*, is the Latin codification of a widespread pattern of folk names, cf. Engl. Job's tears.

[103] Borza, 1968: 250. Literally: *the Mother of God's wood.* See *lemnul-lui-Dumnezeu*.

[104] Bejan, 1991: 109. Literally: *the Mother of God's spoon.* The plant's leaves look like spoons (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 358).

[105] Borza, 1968: 260. Literally: *the Mother of God's palm.* Drăgulescu, 2010: 396 notes that this desert plant opens like a palm if watered. Florea-Marian (2010/II: 423) reveals that the plant was brought from the deserts of Egypt or Syria by monks who also might have baptised it and he adds that the folk name is culturally motivated by a botanical legend.

[106] Borza, 1968: 258. Literally: *the Virgin Mother's broom*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 394 indicates that the plant was traditionally used to make brooms.

[107] Borza, 1968: 267. Literally: *the Mother of God's slipper.* See *papucul-Domnului*.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

Maicii-Domnului[108] (Cladonia pixidata) 107; *părul-Maicii-Domnului*[109] (Adiantum capillus-veneris, Artemisia annua); *poala-Maicii-Domnului*[110] (Convolvulus arvensis); *poala-Sfintei-Mării*[111] (Melissa officinalis) etc.

- *the Saints*: St. Anthony: *iarba-lui-Antonie*[112] (Prunella vulgaris); St. Christopher: *iarba-lui-Cristofor*[113] (Actaea spicata); St. George: *floarea-Sângiorgiului*[114] (Corydalis cava), *iarba-lui-Sf. Gheorghe*[115] (Convallaria majalis); St. Elijah: *biciul-lui-Sf. Ilie*[116] (Poa nemoralis); St. John: *floarea-lui-Sântion*[117] (Galium verum), *iarba-lui-Sf. Ion*[118] (Hypericum perforatum), *pita-lui-Sf. Ion*[119] (Ceratonia siliqua); St. Sophia: *iarba-Sf. Sofia* (Artemisia pontica)[120]; St. Basil: *buruienile-lui-Sf. Vasile*[121] (Inula britannica) etc.

- *the Biblical figures*: Aaron: *barba-lui-Aron*[122] (Arum maculatum); Abraham: *lemnul-lui-Avram*[123] (Vitex agnus-catus); Adam: *palma-lui-Adam*[124] (Symphytum

---

[108] Bejan, 1991: 107. Literally: *the Mother of God's pony*. The shape of the lichen evokes a small glass.

[109] Borza, 1968: 268. Literally: *the Mother of God's hair*. The plant has fine hair-like branches. In line with Quattrocchi's examples (2000/I: 51), common names like the Engl. *Venus' hair* or the It. *capelvenere* may be considered loan translations of the Latin scientific codification proposed by Linnaeus. The Romanian folk name *părul Vinerei* is probably a folk etymology based on the loan translation of the Latin codification.

[110] Bejan, 1991: 109. Literally: *the Mother of God's lap*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 493 assumes that the flowers of the plant are traditionally associated with the Virgin Mary's dress.

[111] Bejan, 1991: 109. Literally: *St. Mary's lap*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 493, many fragrant plants named *poala-Sfintei-Mării* are by tradition associated with the presumed scent of Virgin Mary's clothes. Florea-Marian (2010/III: 79) reveals the benefic uses of the plant.

[112] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *Anthony's herb*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 317 outlines that the ethnobotanical name of this medicinal plant is linked with St. Anthony because the patron saint is regarded as protector and healer.

[113] Borza, 1968: 243. Literally: *the herb of Christopher*. See *cristoforiță*.

[114] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *St. George's flower*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 260 notes that the plant reaches maturity around St. George's Day (the 23rd of April).

[115] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *the herb of St. George*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 317, the plant flowers around St. George's Day (the 23rd of April).

[116] Bejan, 1991: 105. Literally: *the whip of St. Elijah*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 71 discusses the whip-like appearance of the plant. The seeds start reaching maturity around *St. Elijah's Day* (the 20th of July).

[117] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *the flower of St. John*. The plant flowers around St. John's Day (the 24th of June).

[118] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *the herb of St. John*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 317, the plant reaches maturity around St. John's Day (the 24th of June).

[119] Bejan, 1991: 166. Literally: *St. John's bread*. The fruits of the shrub are edible. The ripening of the pods starts in May-June.

[120] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *St. Sophia's herb*. It is an aromatic plant (Drăgulescu, 2010: 321).

[121] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *the weeds of St. Basil*.

[122] Borza, 1968: 205. Literally: *Aron's beard*. Quattrocchi (2000/I: 208) shows that the scientific genus name is rooted in the Greek *aron* 'climbing plant'. The folk name is probably due to a folk etymology.

[123] Borza, 1968: 250. Literally: *Abraham's wood*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 352 considers the Romanian folk name to be a loan translation of the Latin codification arbor Abrahe, as proven by the Germ. Ambrahamsbaum, the Russ. Avramovo derevo or the Hu. Abráhám fája. However, the Romanian folk name could very well be a calque of one of the already mentioned folk names.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

officinale); Judas: *urechea-Iudei*[125] (Peziza coccinea, actually Sarcoscypha coccinea); Solomon: *pecetea-lui-Solomon*[126] (Polygonatum) etc.

- *the Holy Days*: Easter: *floarea-Paștelui*[127] (Anemone nemorosa); the Pentecost: *florile Rusaliilor*[128] (Philadephus coronarius).

The other Genitival pattern involved in the creation of the Romanian ethnobotanical compounds with Christian resonance, [Noun + Noun], brings into attention a variety of analytic plant names, many of which usually include reference to:

- *the devil*: *ardeiul-dracului*[129] (Polygonum hydropiper); *banul-diavolului*[130] (Thlaspi arvense); *barba-dracului*[131] (Cuscuta epithymum); *buruiana-dracului*[132] (Echinops sphaerocephalus); *busuiocul-dracului*[133] (Galinsoga parviflora); *capul-dracului*[134] (Trifolium pratense); *căruța-dracului*[135] (Eryngium campestre); *coada-dracului*[136] (Potentilla anserina); *coasta-vrășmașului*[137] (Asparagus officinalis);

[124] Bejan, 1991: 51. Literally: *Adam's palm*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 446, considers the plant name to be a figure of speech, since no botanical features are involved in the analogy.

[125] Bejan, 1991: 57. Literally: *the ear of Judas*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 639 explains that according to a botanical legend, after Judas hanged himself from tree, one of his ears clung to one of the branches and became a mushroom.

[126] Borza, 1968: 270. Literally: *Solomon's seal*. Following Drăgulescu, 2010: 471, the Romanian folk name is a loan translation of a foreign botanical name, possbily the Hungarian *Salamon pecsét*.

[127] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *the flower of Easter*. The plant flowers around Easter. Florea-Marian (2008/I: 645ff) lists a rich series of regional folk names and recalls the botanical legend that motivates the ethnobotanical denomination. He also provides a number of therapeutical uses.

[128] Borza, 1968: 235. Literally: *the flowers of Pentecost*. The plant flowers around the Pentecost.

[129] Borza, 1968: 203. Literally: *the devil's pepper*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 42 explains that the pepper has a very hot taste.

[130] Borza, 1968: 205. Literally: *the devil's coin*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 53 states that the seed pods of the plant are similar to coins.

[131] Borza, 1968: 205. Literally: *the devil's beard*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 56, the parasitic plant has the general appearance of a beard. The lexical constituent *dracului* indicates its parasitic nature.

[132] Borza, 1968: 212. Literally: *the devil's weed*. Following Drăgulescu, 2010: 112, the reference to the devil implies that the plant is ugly looking and has thorns. In fact, many Romanian analytical phytonyms that encode negative attributes such as 'invasive', 'parasitic', 'thorny', 'toxic', 'ugly' and the like include constituents like *drac* and *diavol*.

[133] Borza, 1968: 214. Literally: *the devil's basil*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 122 considers the weed to be a real pest to cultivated plants.

[134] Borza, 1968: 215. Literally: *the devil's head.* The clover's inflorescence is deemed similar to the devil's head (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 130).

[135] Borza, 1968: 217. Literally: the *devil's chariot*. The ethnobotanical name encodes the stem's property to break off in order to be blown in the wind so as to scatter the seeds (Drăgulescu, 2010: 144).

[136] Borza, 1968: 223. Literally: *the devil's tail*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 183 finds reasons to claim that in the case of this plant with leaves resembling the body of a crayfish a folk etymology changed *coada racului* into *coada dracului*. However, the spiky tail of the devil might as well be considered a denominative prototype.

[137] Borza, 1968: 223. Literally: *the enemy's rib*. The similarity between the appearance of the asparagus and the human ribs (Drăgulescu, 2010: 188), on the one hand, and the Romanian legends of Eve's mistakenly being created from a devil's rib instead of one of Adam's ribs probably led to the creation of the phytonym.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

cornul-dracului[138] (Aruncus vulgaris); *cuibul-necuratului*[139] (Veronica chamaedrys); *dintele-dracului*[140] (Bidens tripartitus); *fasola-dracului*[141] (Aristolochia clematitis); *iarba-dracului*[142] (Datura stramonium); *mușcata-dracului*[143] (Scabiosa atropurpurea, Knautia arvensis); *mușcatul-dracului*[144] (Succisa pratensis); *pușca-dracului*[145] (Dianthus carthusianorum); *spata-dracului*[146] (Dryopteris filix-mas, Dryopteris spinulosa, Phyllitis scolopendrium, Pteridium aquilinum); *spinul-dracului*[147] (Eryngium campestre); *stupitul-satanei*[148] (Russula ermetica) etc.

- *ecclesiastic and monastic figures*: popa (the priest): *banul-popii*[149] (Lysimachia nummularia); *barba-popii*[150] (Viola tricolor); *caii-popii*[151] (Aconitum napellus); *capul-popii*[152] (Trifolium pratense); *caşii-popii*[153] (Globaria gigantea); *căciula-popii*[154] (Euonymus europaeus); *căldăruşa-popii*[155] (Nicandra physaloides); *crucea-*

[138] Borza, 1968: 224. Literally: *the devil's horn*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 201 contends that the name was mistakenly associated with the plant since there is no objective physiological peculiarity to motivate the naming.

[139] Borza, 1968: 227. Literally: *the devil's nest*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 219, a botanical legend motivates the folk name of the plant that resembles a nest.

[140] Borza, 1968: 229. Literally: *the devil's tooth*. The name reflects the tooth-like shape of the seeds that stick to anyone who passes by the plant.

[141] Borza, 1968: 231. Literally: *the devil's bean*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 242 comments that this toxic plant resembles the leguminous plants of the genus Phaseolus.

[142] Borza, 1968: 243. Literally: *the devil's herb*. The ugly-looking pods sheathed in thorns contain toxic seeds.

[143] Borza, 1968: 262. Literally: *the devil's bite*. In the popular imagination, the plant is thought to be bitten by the devil (Drăgulescu, 2010: 419).

[144] Borza, 1968: 262. Literally: *the devil's bite*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 419 indicates that due to the Medieval Latin codification *morbus-diabli* many European languages include loan translations in their ethnobotanical lexicons.

[145] Bejan, 1991: 115. Literally: *the devil's rifle*.

[146] Bejan, 1991: 56. Literally: *the devil's comb*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 578 finds that the folk name illustrates the analogy between the leaves of the plants and the comb of the manual weaving loom.

[147] Bejan, 1991: 141. Literally: *the devil's thorn*. See *căruța-dracului*.

[148] Bejan, 1991: 115. Literally: *the Satan's spit*.

[149] Borza, 1968: 205. Literally: *the priest's coin*. The round-shaped leaves of the plant are similar to coins (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 53).

[150] Bejan, 1991: 48. Literally: *the priest's beard*. The chromatic pattern of the flowers is imaginatively associated with the hues of a priest's long beard. See Drăgulescu, 2010: 57.

[151] Borza, 1968: 215. Literally: *the priest's horses*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 124 explains that the flowers of the plant are vaguely horse-head shaped and, consequently, they are humorously referred to as the priest's "horses".

[152] Borza, 1968: 215. Literally: *the priest's head*. See *capul-dracului*.

[153] Borza, 1968: 216. Literally: *the priest's pot cheese*. The giant white mushroom is compared with a Romanian traditional type of pot cheese called *caş*.

[154] Bejan, 1991: 105. Literally: *the priest's hat*. The ethnobotanical phytonym reflects the analogy between the plant's inflorescence and the head coverings worn by the clergy (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 137).

[155] Borza, 1968: 216. Literally: *the priest's little pail*. In the Orthodox Church priest traditionally make us of small pails to keep or to carry the holy water. In the collective imagination, the flower of the plant is thought to be similar with the ritual vessels used by the priests. See also Drăgulescu, 2010: 138.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

popii[156] (Abutilon theophrasti); *desagii-popii*[157] (Aristolochia clematitis); *iarba-popilor*[158] (Phalaris arundinacea); *lingura-popii*[159] (Aristolochia clematitis, Asarum europaeum); *săpunul-popii*[160] (Saponaria officinalis); *straița-popii*[161] (Capsella bursa-pastoris) etc.; călugărul (the monk): *barba-călugărului*[162] (Conium maculatum); *capul-călugărului*[163] (Leontodon autumnalis); *floarea-călugărului*[164] (Vaccaria pyramidata); *potcapul-călugărului*[165] (Leontopodium alpinum) etc.

Additional minor categories could also be distinguished, if one wants to provide a more detailed inventory of the denominative sources that make up the word stock of analytic plant names with Christian resonance:

- *heaven*: *cheița-raiului*[166] (Commelina communis, Zinnia elegans); *floarea-raiului*[167] (Allium montanum, Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium, Geranium macrorrhizum), *iarba-raiului*[168] (Tanacetum vulgare); *masa-raiului*[169] (Sedum album); *măturoiul-raiului*[170] (Artemisia annua) etc.

[156] Borza, 1968: 226. Literally: According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 213, the fruits of the plant were used as seals to imprint the sign of the cross on the prosphorae.

[157] Borza, 1968: 229. Literally: *the priest's knapsacks*. The fruits of the plant are deemed similar to knapsacks.

[158] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *the priests' herb*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 319, the common name reflects that the ornamental plant is held in high esteem since it is called *brâul Maicii Domnului*, *iarba lui Dumnezeu*, *iarba preoților*, *iarbă frumoasă* etc.

[159] Borza, 1968: 252. Literally: *the priest's spoon*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 358 believes that the common phytonym should be understood in connection with the cures possibly administred by the priests against the typhoid fever (*lângoare*).

[160] Bejan, 1991: 130. Literally: *the priest's soap*. The name outlines the use of this saponin plant (cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 549).

[161] Bejan, 1991: 108. Literally: *the priest's purse*. The widespread Romanian common name of this plant is *traista-ciobanului* (Engl. shepherd's purse). See *punguliță*.

[162] Drăgulescu, 2010: 55. Literally: *the monk's beard*. The white inflorescence of the plant is imagined similar to the white beard of an old monk.

[163] Borza, 1968: 215. Literally: *the monk's head*. The inflorescence of the plant is deemed similar to the head coverings of the Orthodox monks (kamelaukion).

[164] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *the monks' flower*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 256 notes that the flowers of this saponin plant resemble the monk's kamelaukion.

[165] Bejan, 1991: 114. Literally: *the monk's kamelaukion*.

[166] Borza, 1968: 219. Literally: *the key of heaven*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 156 considers the phytonym to be a metaphor.

[167] Borza, 1968: 234. Literally: *the flower of heaven*. According to Drăgulescu, 2010: 260, while the folk name of Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium or Geranium macrorrhizum indicates that the plants have aromatic properties, the common name of Allium montanum is actually a corrupted form of *floarea aiului*. In Romanian, *ai* is an old word that means 'garlic'.

[168] Borza, 1968: 244. Literally: *the grass of heaven*. The fragrance of this aromatic plant favoured the belief that similar aromas must also be in heaven (Cf. Drăgulescu, 2010: 320).

[169] Borza, 1968: 255. Literally: *the table of heaven*. The common phytonym is a metaphor by means of which an analogy between the general appearance of the plant and the imaginary tables of heaven is created (Drăgulescu, 2010: 373).

[170] Borza, 1968: 258. Literally: *the broom of heaven*. See *mătura-Maicii-Precista*.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

- *the cross*: *iarba-crucii*[171] (Hypericum perforatum), *ziua-crucii*[172] (Aster salignus) etc.

Conclusions

The study of the Romanian folk plant names with Biblical and Christian resonance reveals that the domain is structured around prototypes: the Deity, the Virgin Mary, the devil, the Saints, the Holy Days and the clergy. The salience of prototypes is evidenced by the relatively large series of plant names they originate. In the absence of quantitatively rigorous studies concerned with the frequency of words like *Domnul*, *Maica-Domnului*, *drac* or *popă* in the Romanian ethnobotanical lexicon, one can but empirically interogate the prototypical nature of such items. However, the empirical search of the lexicographic works devoted to Romanian folk plant names suggests that Bejan's claim concerning the prominence of terms like *drac*, *Maica Domnului* and *popă* in the creation of folk plant names seems to be correct. In fact, the centrality of such items in the word stock of the common phytonyms with Biblical and Christian resonance is none other but the result of the complex and fertile networks of symbolic values associated to them in the Romanian folklore and language.

A striking consequence of the interaction among such powerful cultural representations and encodings is the polarization of the collective imagery, since in the view of the name-givers plants are ultimately divided into GOOD, that is endowed with positive attributes like protective, useful or pleasant, and BAD, that is invested with negative attributes such as toxic, useless or unpleasant. The natural effect of this fundamental polarity is the creation of a structured ethnobotanical terminology.

Another significant outcome of the basic opposition between good and bad is the contrastive metaphorical conceptualization of the supernatural. Whereas the Deity, the Virgin Mary or the Saints are profoundly humanized, the devil is very often represented as an animal. Therefore, in the collective imagery the conceptual metaphor A DIVINE BEING IS A HUMAN BEING underlies quite a few plant denominations. In the imagination of the people the divine beings are often depicted as peasants. They wear traditional Romanian clothing[173] and footwear[174] and possess objects normally found in the traditional rural household[175]. If the divine beings are almost exclusively portrayed as human, the devil is predominantly represented as a beast, a view which is consistent with the folk imagery of Biblical roots. Thus, the conceptualization AN EVIL BEING IS A BEAST motivates many ethnobotanical images.

---

[171] Borza, 1968: 243. Literally: *the grass of the cross*. The folk name is probably related to a botanical legend based on the powerful image of Christ's crucifixion.

[172] Bejan, 1991: 126. Literally: *the day of the cross*. This common ethnobotanical compound reflects that the plant flowers around the Day of the Holy Cross (the 14th of September).

[173] *brâul-Maicii-Domnului* (Phalaris arundinacea); *cămaşa-Domnului* (Convolvulus arvensis) etc.

[174] *curelele de opinci ale Domnului Hristos* (Triglochin palustre); *papucul-Domnului* (Cypripedium calceolus) etc.

[175] *biciul-lui-Sf. Ilie* (Poa nemoralis); *lingura-Maicii-Domnului* (Cochlearia officinalis), *mătura-Maicii-Precista* (Artemisia annua); *scaunul-Domnului* (Phlox paniculatus) etc.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

The evil being dwells not in houses but in nests[176], it has a frightful appearance[177] and a very aggressive behaviour[178]. However, the conceptualization AN EVIL BEING IS A HUMAN BEING is also relevant in the creation of folk plant names. The devil is not only attributed a human appearance[179], but it is also envisdaged as engaged in typical human activities such as using a chariot[180] or firing a rifle[181]. The Christian "layer" of this worldview does not prevent us from noticing that similar conceptualizations lie beneath the word stock of common plant names with pagan resonance. Given the appropriate conditions, the *isomorphism* triggers the substitution of some folk plant names of pagan resonance with common phytonyms of Christian resonance. Interesting examples that outline the competition among heathen and Christian denominative sources are ethnobotanical names like *busuiocul-sfintelor* (Tanacetum balsamita) and *iarba-sfintelor* (Artemisia arboratum), because the Romanian lexical constituent *sfintelor*[182] is a clear example of how pre-Christian supernatural beings get euphemistical names under the undoubtful influence of Christianity. Moreover, both plants received Christian-based folk names, specifically *izma-Maicii-Precista* (Tanacetum balsamita) and *iarba-lui-Dumnezeu* (Artemisia arboratum). Remarkably, "bad" plants with prior pagan folk names were given a "devilish" denomination. For the plant scientifically known as Datura stramonium the ethnobotanical dictionaries record both a pagan and Christian name: *mărul-strigoiului*[183] vs. *iarba-dracului*.

Such changes in conceptualizations reveal the cultural and ideological ground of the historical plant naming processes and reflect the antropological dimension of naive denominative models like the ethnobiological terminologies.

Last but not least, it is important to single out the relativity of such denominative models. For some plants, the plethora of common names used at different times and in various places indicates that the same reality is multifacetiously designated. Neither the scientific nor the common names encode all biological characteristics of a plant. Instead, several names are used to refer to the natural features of the plant. For instance, Artemisia annua is commonly called lemnul-Maicii-Domnului, because it is a shrub, *mătura-Maicii-Precista* or *măturoiul-raiului*, because it is tradionally used to make brooms and *părul-Maicii-Domnului* because of its fine, hair-like branches with thin, small leaves. As people easily imagined, the broom made of this plant was used by the Mother of God to sweep through heaven just as a peasant woman would clean her house, the common names became linguistic emblems of the

[176] *cuibul-necuratului* (Veronica chamaedrys).
[177] *coada-dracului* (Potentilla anserina), *cornul-dracului* (Aruncus vulgaris).
[178] *mușcatul-dracului* (Succisa pratensis).
[179] *barba-dracului* (Cuscuta epithymum).
[180] *căruța-dracului* (Eryngium campestre).
[181] *pușca-dracului* (Dianthus carthusianorum).
[182] According to Pamfile (2008/II: 254), *ielele* (Engl. aprox. fairies) are ancient and powerful female spirits. To ensure their benevolence, people call them with honouring names such as *Milostivele* (The Merciful), *Doamnele* (The Ladies), *Frumoasele* (The Beautiful) or *Sfintele* (The Saint ones).
[183] Literally: *the ghoul's apple*. Drăgulescu, 2010: 390 notes that this common name relies on the analogy between the round shape of the apple and the egg-like form of the plant's seed pod.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

popular belief. It is then more adequate to assume that such names are not synonymous but complementary since they linguistically encode distinctive attributes of the plant.

Because of the relativity of the perspective upon the features encoded in the common names, many plants acquire antithetic designations. For example, one might contend that the series of folk names for Aristolochia clematitis, namely *fasola-dracului*, *desagii-popii* and *lingura-popii*, includes antonyms since the lexical constituents *dracului* and *popii* pertain to opposite semantic domains. In fact, as shown above, the first name indicates that the plant is poisonous, the second name reflects the knapsack shape of the fruit whilst the third name suggests that the general appearance of the yellow flower is similar to that of a spoon.

Examples of this sort and many others reveal that within the vast and rich repository of any language, folk plant names stand as evidence that reality and culture are linguistically mirrored.

References

Bauhini, Iohan [Bauhin, Johann], *De Plantis a' Divis Sanctis've Nomen Habentibus*, Apud Conrad Waldkirch, Basileae, 1591

Bernhardt, Peter, *Gods and Goddesses in the Garden: Greco-Roman Mythology and the Scientific Names of Plants*, Rutgers University Press, 2008

Borza, Alexandru (coord.), *Dicționar etnobotanic*, Editura Academiei R.S.R., București, 1968

Britten, James, Holland, Robert, *A Dictionary of English Plant-Names*, Trübner & Co., Ludgate Hill, London, 1886

Bussmann, Hadumod, *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*, Routledge, London, New York, 1996

Crystal, David, *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, sixth edition, Blackwell Publishing, 2008

De Gubernatis, Angelo, *La Mythologies des plantes ou les légendes du règne végétal*, vol. I, 1878, vol. II, 1882, C. Reinwald & C-ie, Libraires-Editeurs, Paris

Drăgulescu, Constantin, *Dicționar explicativ al fitonimelor românești*, Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga". Sibiu, 2010

Florea-Marian, Simion, *Botanica poporană română*, vol. I, Editura Muşatinii, Suceava, 2008, vol. II şi III, Editura Academiei Române, Suceava, 2010.

Folkard Richard, *Plant Lore, Legends and Lyrics. Embracing the Myths, Traditions, Superstitions and Folk-Lore of the Plant Kingdom*, second edition, Sampson Low, Marston & Company Limited, London, 1892

Gledhill, David, *The Names of Plants*, fourth edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paolo, 2008

Lemmon, G. T., "Honorary Names in Scientific Nomenclature", *Botanical Gazette*, vol. 3, No. 7 (Jul., 1878), pp. 61-64

Lindsay, T.S., *Plant Names*, *The Sheldon Press*, London, The Macmillan Co., New York and Toronto, 1923

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)

Linnaei, Caroli [Linné, Carl von], *Critica Botanica in qua Nomina Plantarum Generica, Specifica & Variantia Examini Subjiciuntur Selectiora Confirmatur Indigna Rejiciuntur; simulque Doctrina circa Denominationem Plantarum Traditur*, Lugduni Batavorum, Apud Conradum Wishoff, 1737

Linné, Carl von, *Linnaeus' Philosophia Botanica* translated by Stephen Freer, Oxford University Press, 2003

Musselman, Lytton John, A Dictionary of Bible Plants, Oxford University Press, 2012.

Niculiță-Voronca, Elena, *Datinile și credințele poporului român. Adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică*, 2 vols., Editura Saeculum Vizual, Bucureşti, 2008

Pamfile, Tudor, *Mitologia poporului român*, 2 vols., Editura Vestala, Bucureşti, 2008

Panțu, Z. C., *Plantele cunoscute de poporul român*, Institutul de Arte Grafice şi Editură „Minerva", Bucureşti, 1906

Pârvu, Constantin, *Enciclopedia plantelor*, 4 vol., Editura Tehnică, Bucureşti, 2002-2005

Quattrocchi, Umberto, *CRC World Dictionary of Grasses. Common Names, Scientific Names, Eponyms, Synonyms and Etymology*, Vol. I. A-C, vol. II. E-O, vol. III. P-Z, CRC Taylor & Francis Group, Boca Raton, London, New York, 2006

Quattrocchi, Umberto, 2000, *CRC World Dictionary of Plant Names. Common Names, Scientific Names, Eponyms, Synonyms and Etymology*, Vol. I. A-C, vol. II. D-L, vol. III. M-Q, vol. IV. R-Z, CRC Press, Boca Raton, London, New York, Washington D.C.

Rolland, Eugène, 1903, *Flore populaire ou histoire naturelle des plantes dans leurs rapports avec la linguistique et le folk lore*, tome IV, Librairie F. Staude, Paris

Stearn, William T., 1983, *Botanical Latin*, third edition, revised, David & Charles, Newton Abbot, London, North Pomfret

Thiselton-Dyer, T. F., 1889, *The Folk-lore of Plants*, D. Appleton and Company, New York

Tocilescu, Grigore G., Țapu, Christea N., 1980, *Materialuri folcloristice*, 3 vols, Editura Minerva, Bucureşti

Watts, Donald C., 2007, *Elsevier's Dictionary of Plant Lore*, Elsevier, Amsterdam, Boston, Heidelberg, London, New York, Oxford, Paris, San Diego, San Francisco, Singapore, Sydney, Tokyo

Wom Bruck, Gabriele, Bodenhorn, Barbara (eds), 2006, *The Anthropology of Names and Naming*, Cambridge University Press

This research was made possible with the support of the Project POSDRU/89/1.5/S/49944, Developing the Innovation Capacity and Improving the Impact of Research through Post-doctoral Programmes.

BDD-A229 © 2013 Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 08:51:10 UTC)