

EDITORIAL Naming Across Cultures

Purely arbitrary or entirely motivated, proper names of all kinds seem to have a life of their own, being born(e) significantly, transcending ages and cultures gloriously, and, sometimes, dying out discreetly. When scholarly investigated, they are praised as meaning-bearers or discarded as empty carriers, being interpreted as context-dependent or context-independent.

Based primarily on collaborative research work, most articles in the current issue give prominence to onomastic, literary and cultural studies that underline the richness, diversity, interconnectedness and plurisignificance of naming patterns and identity markers across different cultures.

The opening article authored by Luminița Drugă and Nadia-Nicoleta Morărașu provides relevant evidence of the existence of some automotive denominative practices in Romania that involve the usage of personal car names, car brand names and, surprisingly, vehicle registration numbers as cultural microtexts in which personal biography, local identity and social symbolism intersect.

Initiated with the purpose of indicating how Romanian cultural identity is constructed in the diaspora, Maria Micle and Alina Romașcu's research confirms that cultural practices are forms of affirming national identity and preserving the feeling of belonging to the country of origin.

Veronika Kelbecheva and Gergana Petkova justify their interest in the usage of drug brand names during the Latin practical classes taken by Bulgarian pharmaceutical students by need of providing information about drug brand names, their regulation, structural patterns, and etymological background. Gergana Petkova also proposes an original investigation of Bulgarian anthroponyms derived from Neo-Latin names by using lexicological excerption and linguistic and extralinguistic analyses.

Corina-Mariana Mitrulescu keenly analyses the symbolic and performative role of renaming in literary representations of the Magdalene laundries in contemporary Irish literature, which brings a significant contribution to "interdisciplinary discussions on gender, memory and narrative justice" (70), while Oana-Crina Gocu and Nadia-Nicoleta Morărașu explore the connection between the post-Brexit identity crises and the (un)naming strategies used in Anna Burns' *Milkman*.

In “Naming Culture Specifics: Human vs. AI Translation”, Svetlana Nedelcheva uses two versions of Georgi Gospodinov’s *Time Shelter* as a case study indicating that, despite clear improvements in the quality of artificial intelligence systems, these are incapable of creating complete artistic images and of replacing humans in creative activities such as literary translation.

In considering names as “linguistic markers of identity shaped by social structures” (122), Idowu Olusola Odebode, Esther Avosuahi Onmoke and Oluwatosin Mercy Ajayi choose a combination of socio-onomastic qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis to explore the interplay of religion, culture, and historical identity in the naming patterns of Nigerian past and present rulers.

Monica Ruset Oanca’s study underlines the theological significance of the act of naming animals, its relevance within the context of English bestiaries and the distinctions between the Latin text of bestiaries and their Middle English and Middle French translations (207).

Kyzdarkhan Rysbergen and Eugen Schochenmaier explore the Cyrillic-to-Latin script reform in Kazakhstan through a comparative analysis of how proper names are treated in similar reforms in Turkic, Slavic, and Romance-speaking countries (228).

A body of intercultural and interdisciplinary research on the topic of connectivity and mobility across cultures, conducted by Deyana Peneva, Lavinia Suciu, Alina-Elena Romaşcu and Elia Villecalle, contributes to understanding the dynamic connection among space, place and literature and shows new ways of forming cultural identity¹.

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¹ https://www.ub.ro/litere/st/Call_for_papers._Discursive_Forms_2025.pdf.