

A TOPONOMICAL APPROACH TO THE AGRARIAN HISTORY OF THE PĂTÂRLAGELE DEPRESSION (BUZĂU SUBCARPATHIANS, ROMÂNIA)

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The Subcarpathians are well-known as a relatively well-settled region since early times. But it is also evident that the majority of settlements are relatively modern and reflect the expansion of subsistence farming from the major valleys on to the hillsides during a period of acute population pressure in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This phase of growth is investigated in the context of the Pătârlagele Depression through toponomy, with the names used by topographical maps – and such key texts as Iorgulescu's work of 1892 – supplemented by exhaustive research into the oral evidence, much of which can reasonably be linked with this period of expansion. The paper pays particular attention to landslide areas that were often attractive to pioneer peasant farmers on account of their soil fertility and moisture context. It is evident that many areas used today for hay, pasture and plum orchards were well cultivated until cereal lands were acquired in the Bărăgan Plain under the 1923 land reform and economic diversification accelerated after 1945. Toponomy is therefore presented as a major source for the reconstruction of an important phase of rural settlement.

Key Words: Agriculture, Buzău, Landslides, Pătârlagele, Rural Settlement, Toponomy, Subcarpathians.

Introduction

This paper derives from fieldwork and documentary study carried out since the 1980s in the Pătârlagele Depression: defined as the recently-declared town of Pătârlagele (with its constituent villages) and the adjacent commune of Pănătău. Much of our work has been concerned with contemporary developments in the human geography (Muică & Turnock 1997) but we have also examined the historical literature, particularly with regard to the tradition of pluriactivity (Muica et al. 2000a; 2000b; Muică & Turnock 2003) and supplemented this by collecting all the available oral evidence. Despite the assumption that the Subcarpathian region has been well-settled since both prehistory and the invasion period – a point emphasised by Petrescu-Burloiu (1977, pp.139–40) in a survey of the Buzău

Subcarpathians as a whole – the present settlement pattern developed mainly in the nineteenth century according to cartographic evidence: the 1916 'Nachdruck von der Kartographische Abteilung' (based on data for 1894-6) provides a picture for the end of the nineteenth century while the end of the eighteenth century is covered by Specht's 'Militairische Carte' (1791) and von Bauer's 'Mémoires Historiques' (1778). Out of a total of 119 settlements (including many that are merely neighbourhoods within larger villages) only 41 can be convincingly dated to the eighteenth century or earlier (Muică & Turnock in press) (Figure 1). Of course some settlements may well be much older, but the key point to make is the apparent focus of the early settlement on the lower ground (and especially the Buzău terraces) with only temporary/seasonal use of the higher ground, which

could of course include an element of monastic settlement in the form of hermitages that provide a possible origin for Cârnu monastery. The latter is known from the sixteenth century, along with a cluster the three leading settlements beside the Buzău river: Pătărlagele, Sibiciu de Jos and Sibiciu

de Sus. On the other hand, our evidence points to a remarkable explosion of hamlet settlement during the nineteenth century which we attribute in part to a growth in population that forced subsistence farming on to landslides covering a considerable proportion of the hillslopes in the area.

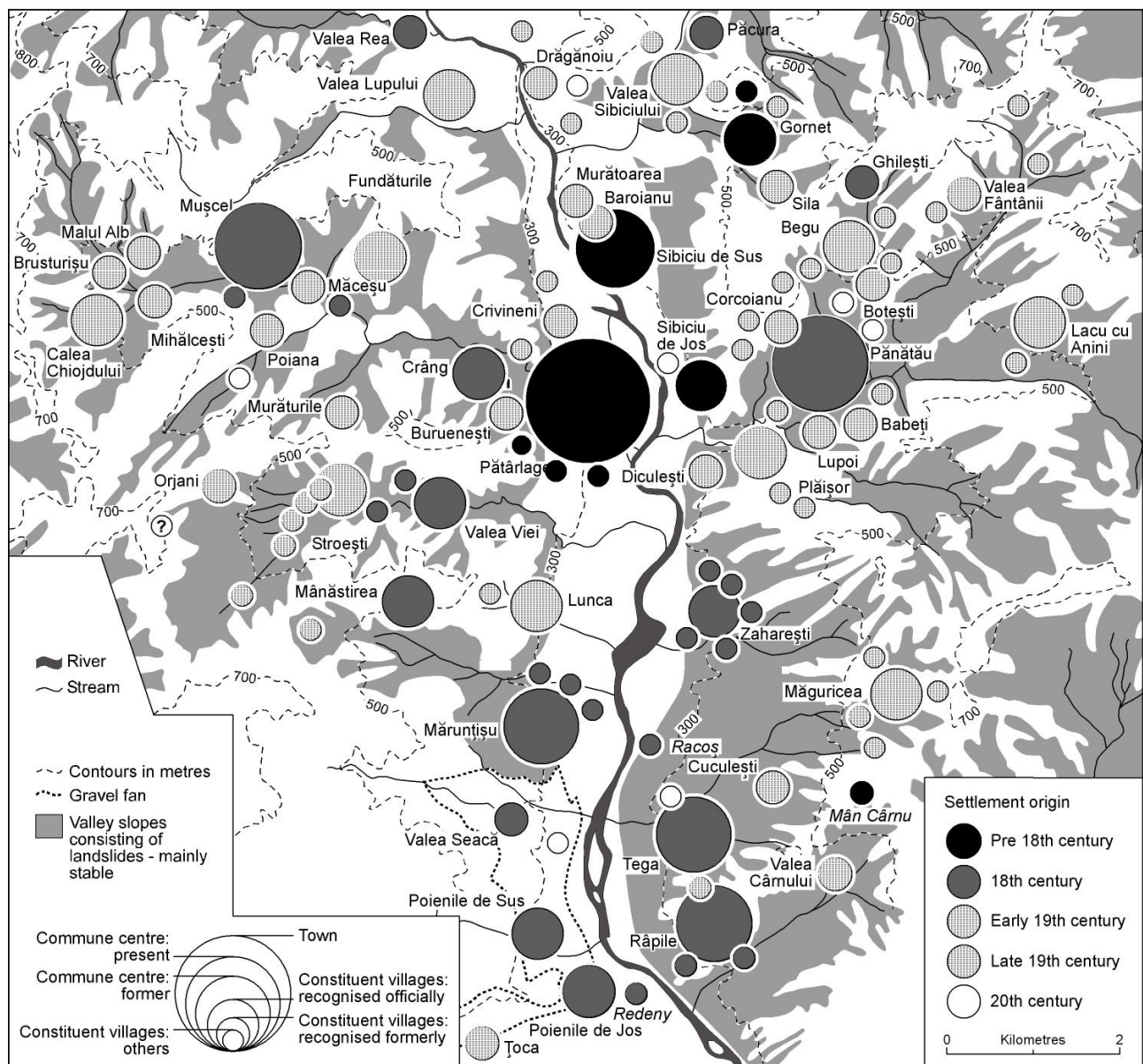


Figure 1 The origin of settlements in the Pătrărlagele Depression according to the earliest documentary evidence

Specific dates within the nineteenth century are difficult to specify but the remarkably detailed Russian Map ('Harta Rusă/Rusească) of 1853 allows us to calculate that there were 31 new settlements in the early part of the century and 40 in the later part; contributing a very substantial secondary network that was supplemented by only seven further units in the twentieth century. Population figures are of little help but there are statistics relating to realting to families in 1831-2 (Anon 1892) while Baranovsky & Ștefănescu (1965) have referred to Colescu's comparable data collected in 1899 and published in 1905. These figures indicate that families increased from 1,614 (the average for 1831 and 1832) to 3,503 in 1899: an increase of 112 per cent which applied in both the low-ground settlements close to Pătârlagele (growing from 1,167 families to 2,536) and an outer ring (comprising the principal villages of Begu, Gornet, Lacu cu Anini, Măguricea, Râpile, Tega and Valea Fântânii on the eastern side of the Buzău valley – also Calea Chiojdului, Fundăturile, Mânăstirea, Mușcel and Stroești on the western side) that increased from 447 to 967 families. The latter's share of the total remained virtually unchanged (38.3 per cent in 1831-2 and 38.1 per cent in 1899) despite the high level of dependence on agriculture in contrast to the commercial growth in the main valley. Population in 1912 for the outer ring was 3,186 (38.1 per cent of a total for the district of 10,994), with further growth to 4,788 in 1941 (36.4 per cent of the district total of 13,162) before slipping back to 4,506 in 1966 (34.9 per cent of a total of 12,911). Only after this was there a significant change through cooperative farm resettlement policies which reduced the outer zone total to 2,270 in 1992 (19.3 per cent of a total of 11,778) with 2,083 in 2002 (18.6 per cent of a total

of 11,179). The other side of the coin is the growth of Pătârlagele over the last half-century which underpins a massive redistribution in the context of a relatively stable population for the district as a whole.

Predictably the 'outer ring' settlements seem to have been less nucleated than those of the inner circle since the priority was not the growth of central places but the needs of subsistence farmers seeking a niche in the age of capitalism – typically in relatively remote areas on landslides as well as the fragments of 'mature landscape' on the higher ground reflected by suites of agro-terraces like those above Corcoianu. Indeed we would underline the quite remarkable situation in which the hillslopes – extensively covered with relatively fertile landslide material – offered much support to scattered subsistence communities that flourished in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as part of an 'alternative' socio-economic system to the mainstream scenario based on the main settlements with capitalist farming supported by the rich agriculture of the Buzău terraces as well as a modern infrastructure based on road and rail communications along the main valley. This centre-periphery dualism would have been accentuated following the abolition of feudalism through landowner priority for commercial farming on the terraces while much of the subsistence farming was transferred to the landslides. Although relatively remote and inherently unstable, intensive use of the hills was certainly maintained until alternative cereal lands were allocated in the Bărăgan as part of the 1923 land reform and continued on a considerable scale until collectivisation in the 1960s brought a measure of resettlement with expansion at Pătârlagele, as well as Mărunțișu, Pănătău, Sibiciu de Jos and

Sibiciu de Sus balanced by decline in the hill villages: especially Gornet, Lacu cu Anin and Valea Fântâniî on the eastern side of the Buzău valley and Stroești and parts of Mușcel on the western side. Very little documentation is available to expand and illustrate this scenario of settlement advance and retreat over a relatively short period of time. Statistics relating to the former communes (Mărunțișu, Mlăjet, Mușcel, Rușavăț and Sibiciu - also Tega for a short period – in addition to Pănătău and Pătarlagele) give only an overall picture while Iorgulescu's epic study of 1892 says little about local variations in the human geography, although it is a useful source for toponymy which forms the basis of this paper. Our study began with the topographical maps of the area and expanded to take in all literary sources, but it was greatly developed by a rich haul of oral evidence recorded and digested over the last few years with the help of several 'key contacts' in the area who are acknowledged below. Indeed out of a total of exactly 650 named locations (excluding settlements) 305 are known only through oral evidence. Some study of the toponymy in the Curvature Subcarpathians has previously been carried out by Nancu & Alexandrescu (1993) with particular reference settlement names but we believe that our comprehensive survey in Pătarlagele is original.

The Local Terrain

In terms of altitude the area extends from 250m at Gura Bâscii to 967m at Vf.Stâniî (909m at Vf.Pătarlagelor, southeast of Vf. Stâniî; 827m at Vf.Cornetului above Mănăstirea) while on the eastern side the hills extend to 819m at Vf.Blidișel opposite Pătarlagele and 752m at Mu.Chiliilor above Măguricea (Figure 2).

Thus we have a countryside of depressions and rolling hills at 300-900m. The complex geology embraces Miocene and Pliocene rocks that vary greatly in their resistance to erosion, ranging from clays and marls to limestones and sandstones. The landscape is remarkably youthful because of the vertical uplift of about 1,000m during the Quaternary which continues today at the modest rate of 0.5-1.5mm per annum. Rivers have become ever more deeply incised in an area of steeply-inclined (sometimes near vertical) strata. Hills manifest youthful characteristics, while valley deepening also results in a massive and continuing transfer of material from the slopes to the channels. But great instability arises from the geology that throws together a variety of sedimentary rocks: clays, marls, sands and gravels intercalated with more resistant cemented rocks: sandstone (calcareous, silicious or otherwise depending on the binding material), limestone, gypsum and even conglomerate which may be steeply sloping or even in the vertical position. Level ground is to be found on the Buzău alluvial lands comprising well-developed terrace systems appearing as steps beginning just 3.0-4.0m above the floodplain; complemented by fragments of mature relief on the higher ground where mature/fossil soils support pastures and hayfields today with ample traces of former cropping activity as well. The high terraces of the Buzău and other rivers have cut across geological layers of varied resistance and inclination - even the vertical position. On the right (western) side of the Buzău on the hill of Mș.Pătarlagelor, above C.Crivenilor with terrace fragments at 180-200m, we have a very clear legacy through old/developed relief with a gently-inclined 3-5deg. surface facing the Buzău valley and carved in vertical geological layers.

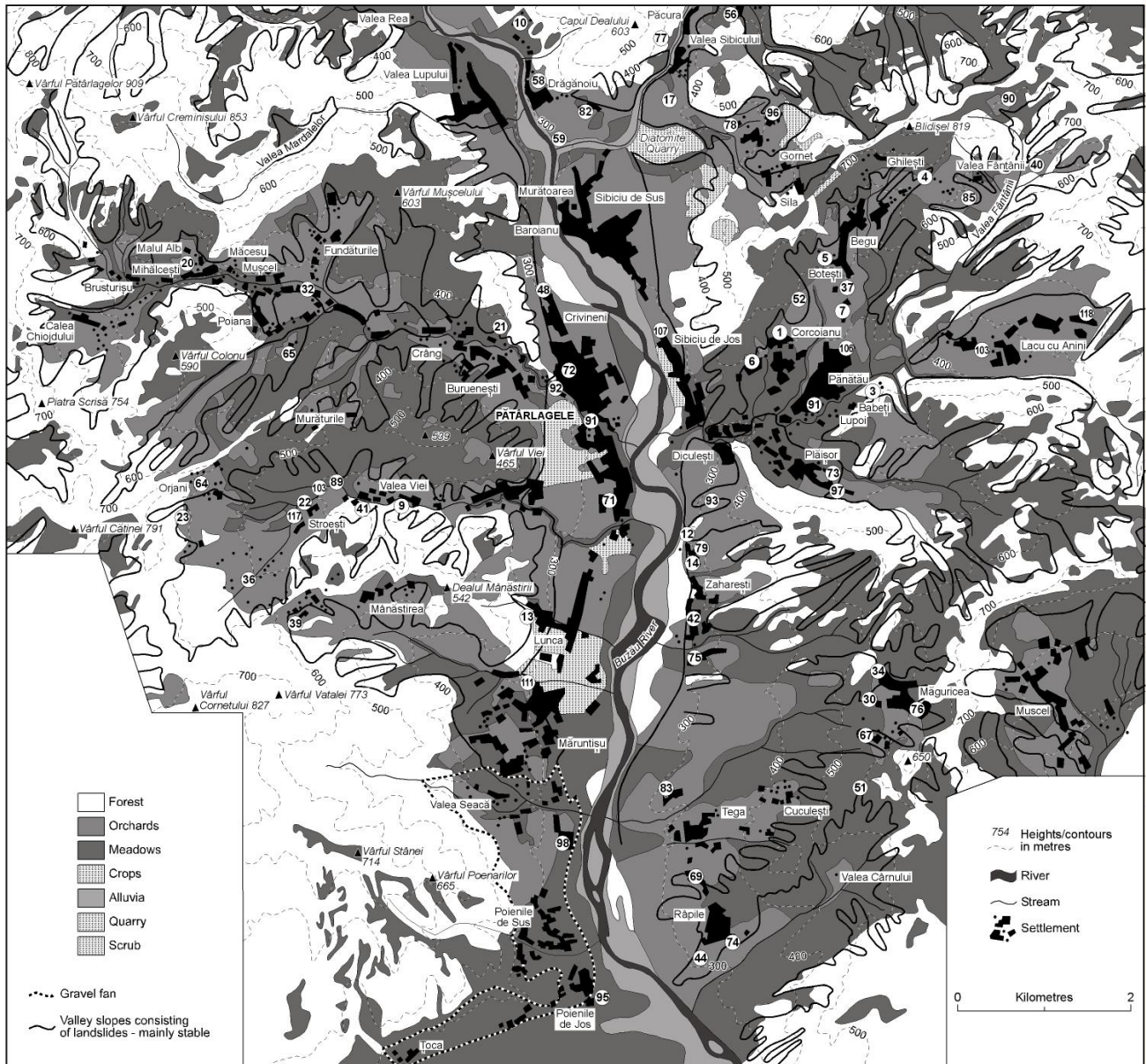


Figure 2 The landscape of the Patarlagele Depression

There are also fragments of old terraces (limited by steep slopes) on the east-south-eastern part of the Dl.Viei summit, although there is no surface of uniform inclination here but rather some near-horizontal areas of agricultural value separated and dominated by small summits transversally orientated (due to the vertical geological layers with varied resistance at the erosion). Another example concerns the eastern part of Dl.Mânăstirii (south of V.Viei) where the remnant of an old surface appears as a slope between two old terraces: although very limited in

extent there is some clarity through the mature soil that is visible in some 'precipices' that form parts of this slope. And in the western part of Dl.Mânăstirii there are also remnants of Villafranchian gravels; some of them in a highly modified form with a reddish or reddish-brown colour. Other evidence of old relief comes from Dl.Colonu and Pl.Mușcelului, on the right side of V.Mușcelului, while on the other side of the Buzău the best site is Presvale with steps occurring consistently in the 500-650m. band. But other examples are Poduri at Corcoianu, with maize

still grown in the vicinity, and Luncă (at Begu). And at the very highest level on Blidişel there is a little horizontal surface cutting into layers (of varied resistance) inclined to south with a 25-30deg. slope (at Presvale the layers are vertical) whereas on Seciu hill above Râpile the surface coincides with the disposition of the geological strata inclined gently to the west.

The hillslopes are extremely varied and in places are quite precipitous with young soils (and even bare rock) characteristic of new landscape cycle. Such land is usually occupied by forest or, in the event of forest clearance, by thorn bushes and poor grassland on eroded soil and bare rock. Valley landscapes show some quite dramatic contrasts according to the changes in lithology. The Pănătău stream (a tributary of the Buzău) has cut an impressive series of scarps in sandy material to form a scenic backdrop to Begu village. However landslips at the contact of strata are very frequent and these may give rise to give steep cliff faces ('abrupturi'). The hills east of the Buzău (north of Zahareşti and east of Valea Fântâniei) are typical *cuestas* with a steep north and northwest ('Dos': abbreviated Ds) slope to the north – e.g. D.Pănătăului/Plăişorului – and the 12-15deg. structural surface ('Faţă': F) to the south and southeast. Aspect is a very important consideration regarding agricultural potential as in alpine areas: it is quite common to see north-facing *cuestas* displaying contrasting land uses: forest to the north and agriculture, pasture and fruit trees to the south. Some slopes are steep in the upper part (due to erosion) and yet grade into fans of deposited material lower down. Mărunţişu village is situated on an old fan - partially eroded to reveal rock below the alluvium. The wind is channelled down the valley so trees are slightly

inclined in this direction (though the circulation may be diverted due to currents). Where the ridge is forested on both sides it is likely that there will be oak to the south and beech to the north; also beech above oak following the system of altitudinal layers (although beech is found below the oak at the foot of the southern slope in a narrow valley which is heavily shaded and therefore cold). Reference should also be made to the high salt content of the sediments in the depression; also in the brooks and spring waters (even the Buzău river near Valea Lupului and Sibiciu de Sus). Because of the salt content, the stone and sand loses part of its value as construction material (although the gravel from Dl.Cornet is very good when mixed with cement).

Landslides

But much emphasis must be given to landslides ('pornituri') since mass movement occurs throughout the extensive 'flysch zone' of the Carpathians, given the great variety in lithology as well as tectonic and structural fragmentation conducive to a dense river network (Muică & Turnock 1994). But these characteristics apply especially to the Curvature Carpathians where the instability of the hillslopes – comprising most of the agricultural land – has always posed risks for settlement. And these hazards have become more significant today in the context of increasing investment in housing and infrastructure (Bogdan & Bălteanu eds. 1986). Although aggravated by deforestation and soil erosion resulting from agriculture, mass movement follows inevitably from the deep cutting of river contemporaneous with tectonic uplift, for slopes must adjust to find a new equilibrium. Solifluction may take place almost imperceptibly but the more dramatic landslides

usually arise from a major collapse of a hill slope, followed by a sliding or flowing of material on a relatively grand scale. In the process, the mixing of the material under moist conditions and high rainfall intensity may give rise to mudflows. Landslides occupy large areas in the Subcarpathians, sometimes exceeding two-thirds of the total area. In some catchments they have distinctive shapes reminiscent of cirques, glacier tongues, alluvial fans or a torrential glacis at the foot of a slope. On the other hand they may have more indefinite shapes when they are developed on structural slopes or at the head of valleys cut in marl. Even the most stable areas, based on rock that has not been dislocated, are also affected because they may well be covered by material transported by landslides so that their influence on soil and relief is therefore enhanced.

However landslide material varies considerably in character. The main ingredients are clay, marl and sandstone, the proportions vary as do the amounts of lubrication (for heavy rain may well provoke sudden changes in the speed of advance), while fragments of hard rock may occasionally predominate. The depth of the landslides varies considerably: most are quite shallow (0.4-0.8m) but some reach as much as 10.0m (though only occasionally more than this). The shallower landslides tend to be the more extensive – emanating from amphitheatres (formed by the slumping of part of the hillside) to occupy as much as two-thirds of a hillslope. As material is torn away to form a landslide source area, a quite large steep-sided ‘detachment cup’ may be created to resemble a glacial cirque. Landslides usually appear quite flat (with a smooth undulating surface where there is no coarse material) and gentle slopes of 10-15deg. They are thrown strongly into relief on slopes carved at the head of the strata while those on

slopes corresponding to the structural plain are flat. In the case of landslides on the flank of the strata the contrast on the upper part of the slope depends on the difference between the resistance of the bedrock and the landslide material: in the case of steeply-inclined or vertical strata the clayey material moves downwards, sliding or flowing, while the hard strata remains in the relief: like a wall if there is a sudden change in the lithology. In terms of age there are variations between old landslides that have been stable for a long time (dating to a time before the last dry period with which loess deposits are associated) and others which are much younger and perhaps just beginning to move after a series of years with above-average rainfall. However most landslides are intermediate between these two extremes with contrasting vegetation patterns. Yet landslides are never entirely stable and their dynamism is a function of geological formation and the level of moisture; also the youthfulness of the relief, for activity is triggered by river erosion cutting into landslide deposits. Dipping strata offer further variety through the contrast between the scarp slopes (usually heavily wooded) and the dip slope that breaks down into distinct land use compartments on the basis of lithology (Muică & Bălțeanu 1995).

Landslides also have great significance for settlement because of their fertility and moisture content. Generally on the steep upper part of the slope the soil is superficial, very young and without the capacity to retain precipitation; but in the lower part the material is not very dense while the young soil is slightly more mature and has a porosity capable of retaining moisture and supporting plants. And although through mass movement the plant

cover shows a mosaic structure regarding floristic composition and density, it becomes more homogenous (in conformity with the zonal vegetation) as movement slows or ceases. Planting of trees or ‘cătina’ helps to fix the ground and stimulate drainage so as to yield meadow associations for grazings, although weeds are more abundant than on more mature soils and excessive grazing can stop or even reverse the regeneration of the plant cover (C.Muică & Bălțeanu 1995). In practice however landsliding occurs on a cyclical pattern and on each occasion a process of soil formation will be interrupted. Indeed their agricultural potential not despite but rather because of their instability which maintains a natural ‘churning’ process to enhance moisture and fertility. The lack of extensive smooth surfaces with easy access – so important for commercial agriculture – is no great handicap for subsistence farming when people are able to live in close proximity with the inevitability of eventual destruction of houses minimised by the regular rebuilding at least every generation. Since they offer moisture retention (particularly valuable during dry periods) and remove salt from the soil, even the shallowest landslide tongues (‘limbi de pornituri’) are widely used for agriculture (maize, fruit trees and hay) in contrast pasture and forest which prevails elsewhere.

Extensive surveys have been carried out on the landslides around the Pătarlagele research station to reveal extensive surfaces consisting of old landslides that have stabilised and offer fertile, mature soil, while other landslides are in motion according to the controls just mentioned; including river erosion of landslide deposits which is evident in the Tega area. It is evident that where movement is slow, erosion at the

lower end may leave a surface almost suspended (‘agestre aproape suspendate’) as at Fundăturile, Valea Sibiciului and the part of Valea Viei above the old church. Meanwhile the cyclical pattern of landslide activity is very evident in a profile at Begu showing four cycles of soil formation extending, cumulatively, over the best part of a century. Most landslides are smooth and potentially amenable to cultivation but there are exceptions where large blocks of stone (the size of a room in a house) may be transported over distances of several kilometres. The best example concerns the two erratics (originally three) known as ‘Pietrile lui Novac’ – named after the famous strongman of Romanian mythology – which can be seen close to the Buzău river, having originated five kilometres away in Mu.Predealului above Valea Fântâni. Agricultural use of landslides is very evident e.g. in the Mușcel valley above Brusturișu; Valea Viei in the case of mass movement below Stroești; and the Burdușoia tongue originating at Gornet and Sila that threatens the road between Sibiciu de Sus and Valea Sibiciului with its delta formation. Old landslides are particularly valuable e.g. at Tega where the name ‘Țarina’ (abbreviated ‘Ț’) is used for all the surfaces that are good for agriculture. Many villages are situated wholly or partially on landslides: Begu, Corcoianu, Crâng, Fundăturile, Gornet, Mușcel, Pănătau, Râpile, Stroești, Tega, Valea Sibiciului and the older part of Valea Viei. Meanwhile torrential gravel fans (‘agestre torentiale’) supplied by D.I.Cornetului provide sites for the villages of Poenile and Valea Seacă. They provide a good water supply (without salt - or the sulphur that occurs in the water from the nearby quarry) but they dry out quickly and peasants may remove gravel if they can to provide better conditions for fruit trees.

The Placenames

In examining the toponymy it is necessary to introduce various types of feature for which the Romanian names are abbreviated. They are summarised here using the singular form with the indefinite article and some have already e.g. ‘Dos’ and ‘Față’, with which ‘Fund’ (Fd) - the back side – may be associated. Munte (M) is a mountain; Cap (Cp) a hilltop; Deal (Dl) a hill. Plai (Pl) indicates a near-horizontal surface (perhaps with some undulation) on a hill or mountain summit – as opposed to Muchie (Mu) – a crest; and Vârf (Vf) – a peak as in Vf.Cătinei or Vf.Pănătăului. Pod (Po) also refers to horizontal surface or a step on a hill or mountain slope e.g. Poduri-Pe on old landslides south of Valea Fântâni and Po.Văii Lupului, while Poduri is a village name in the Tega area. Talpă (T) is a pavement; Coastă (C) a hillslope; Mușcel (Mș) a gentle slope with landslides; Culme (Cu) a ridge; and Pisc (Ps) a ridge or peak. Mal (Ma) and Râpă (Rp) indicate a precipice; Pripor (Pp) is a steep slope e.g. the summit north of Lacu cu Anini and above Malul Alb (Mușcel) – it is also the name for a small neighbourhood in Pănătău village. Ruptură (Ru) occurs in areas with young landslides (from the Romanian verb ‘a rupe’ meaning to tear, as a result of sliding) e.g. Rupturi north of Măguricea and Ru.Simei in the basin of Gâ.Croitorului. Piatra (Pt) is a rock. Râu (R) refers to a river; Vale (V) is a valley which may be small, with no permanent stream (e.g. V.Boului, V.Corbului and V.Neamțului), or a very large valley drained by a substantial stream (e.g. V.Lupului and V.Viei); while Gârlă (Gâ) is a marshy brook; Pârâu (P) is a small stream; and Gură (Gu) is the mouth of a stream. Izvor (I) commonly refers to a spring but in the Pătârlăgele area it means a little

brook e.g. I.Blidarilor, I.Butucilor and I. Chiliei at Zaharești; Vână (Vn) is also a spring but may also refer to a brook. Ciuciu (Ci) is a spring while Saramură (Sm) is a very salty spring; Fântână (Fn) and Puț (Pu) both indicate a well. Groapă (G.) usually means a small hollow or concavity; similarly Cuib (Cb) – a nest; and ‘Depresiune’ (Dp) – a depression. Lac (L) refers to a lake or a small depression, generally on landslides, (almost) permanently containing water, while Bâlcă (B) is a small water-filled hollow and Luncă (Lu) a floodplain. Turning to the vegetation, Pădure (Pd) denotes woodland; Laz (Lz) a recently deforested area; Poiana (Pn) a clearing; and Fag (Fg) a beech tree. Finally with regard to farming and movement, Arie (A) is an outdoor threshing floor; Fâneță (Fa) is hayland; Hotar (H) is a boundary; Moară (Mo) a mill; Obor (O) a cattle farm; Oda (Od) a sheep farm; Pom (Pm) a fruit tree; Poartă (Pr) a gate or entrance; and Stână (Sn) a pasture station. Drum (Dr) is a road and Cruce (Cr) is a wayside cross.

References to Topography

Specific surfaces typically have their own names that may reflect their varied agricultural potentials. Hilltops may consist of smooth crests with a well-developed soil – like Comori and Pn.Ulmului already mentioned – and others such as Vf.Linței (Lința’s peak) in Begu, La Inărie (‘at the flax’ near Mânăstirea) and Mș.Lupenilor – a reference to the Lupeniu people i.e. Valea Lupului – above Mu.Pătârlagelor. Such surfaces also offered good topoclimatic conditions with dry, fresh air in contrast to the depressions. A smooth summit may carry the name Pleșuva – the summit with pasture – as at Gornet; while Măguricea offers Muchiuliță La – at the little hill crest - using the diminutive form of

‘much’. Râpile includes Mu.lui Tudor Vlad (Tudor Vlad’s summit with pasture) while Sibiciu de Jos has Mu.Pridvalei – the summit of Pridvale – with a south-facing, gentle surface at the western limit of Ch.Corcoianului (formerly with crops and plum trees, but now only pasture) where the many paths have accelerated erosion (though such problems are widespread given the heavy population pressure of the past). Zaharești has Dl.Dârstei (Dârste’s hill at 442m) with a steep slope to the northwest (hence Ma.Dârstei) but a gentle slope to the southeast suitable for fruit trees, pasture and hay (with cropping in the past). But not all the high surfaces are so well-endowed. Stoney ground is obviously unsuitable for intensive use, as in the case of Mu.Pietrelor (the summit of the stones) near Pănătău, while Pt.Predealului (the stones of Predeal) refers to the sandstone surface (at the source of V.Fântâni) which is actually a 35deg. slope almost totally bare of soil and vegetation. Other references to rocky summits occur at Lacu cu Anini with Șerpăria - a place with snakes - on a rocky slope southeast of Vlăicești near La Dobrești brook; also at Măguricea where Mu.Înaltă comprises a rocky crest above Mân.Cârnu: such summits typically support only a poor vegetation (if any) which the names may emphasise e.g. Vf.Cătinei (791m) – buckthorn peak – for a hill near Stroești.

But more fundamental is the distinction between north- and south-facing slopes. F.Begului is the south-facing slope of Begu; F.cu Gorâni is a sunny slope (historically with evergreen forest) at Lacu cu Anini; and at Râpile we have F.Cârnu: the south-facing slope of Cârnu. Plăișor people use Fața-Pe for their south-facing slope and also Ds.Plăișorului for the north-facing slope. And a further example of the pairing comes from the edge of our area 2.0kms

east of Plăișor there is F.Mușcelului (the face of Mușcel) – actually alluding to the village of Muscelu-Țigan outside our study area which is an important area for fruit trees, hay and pasture: much more valuable than Ds.Mușcelului (the north-facing hillslope of Muscelu-Țigan) with woodland on the north side of the rocky crest that is the source of I.Croitorului and Gâ.Plăișorului. At Babeți (one of the hamlets comprising the present Pănătău village) Ds.Babeților is a north-facing hillslope with scrub and forest. On the western side of the Buzău valley near Stroesti, Dl.F.Botii/F.Boții – the south-facing slope of Bota – complements the north-facing slope of Pl.Botii or Dl.Rezii; while nearby at Mănăstirea, Dostină or Doștina is a place on a north-facing slope (with the ‘dos’ element indicating the shaded side of Dl.Mănăstirii). At the same time conditions in the valleys are highly variable as regards the quality of the land: steepness, smoothness and the available moisture. A particularly rough valley may well be called a bad valley e.g. I.Rău at Mușcel and Stroești, or V.Rea at Toca and Valea Lupului. The latter also offers F.V.Rele (meaning the bottom of the bad valley) which is a small depression in the upper part of V.Rea. Some valleys may also have reputation for coldness e.g. V.Rece (the cold valley) at Mănăstirea in the upper part of a valley on the eastern side of Dl.Cornet (albeit with a good water spring); also Geroasa (the valley of the frost, a name derived from ‘ger’ which means frost) at Măguricea. And water is often a problem in view of the many dry valleys: hence V.Seacă (the dry valley) at Pănătău and other places; while water sources are typically described in terms of their saltiness e.g. at Stroești we encounter Saramura or I.Sărat (salt water or a salt spring); also Sărățel (a diminutive form indicating a

little salt brook) and V.Sărătorei which is the salt spring or valley. Other villages with such references in their localities are: Crivineni, Măguricea, Murăturile, Muşcel, Râpile, Stroeşti and Valea Sibiciului. And while such salt water sources may be useful for cooking and pickling there are obvious problems over watering livestock, while salt deposits on pastureland reduce the grazing potential.

References to Landslides

Landslides are typically distinguished by references to small surfaces e.g. Podişor (using the diminutive form of 'pod') appears at Lacu cu Anini in relation to a large landslide above Pn.Silei used for pasture and hay; while I/V.Podişorului (the valley of the small tableland) situated north of Pănătău is a typical valley influenced by landslides. There are also allusions to 'swollen land': a good example is Burduşoia – derived from 'burduşit' meaning swollen, loose or spongy material – which applies very well to the landslide tongue of 2.0km (with potential for crops, fruit trees, hay and pasture) which attracted the nineteenth century hamlet settlement of Burduşoia: it is now abandoned but Gornet remains on the upper part of this same landslide tongue where some stability is offered. Meanwhile Zahareşti has access to the old landslide of Blidişei: a name which also conveys the sense of 'waving land' typically used now for hay, pasture and fruit trees in V. Lacului/V.Ciocârlanului. Also Dutina (Lacu cu Anini) is a forested place above Vlăiceşti on a gently-inclined 'waving' surface. Then there are many other names that highlight the scars, precipices or 'tears' where landslides pull away from their source materials. Rupturi-In/Rupturi ('in the tears') refers to a recent landslide in an area with fragile equilibrium north-north-west of Brusturişu. Rupturi-În refers to recent

landslides near C.cu Gorâni at Sibiciu de Jos, while Ruptură-În/La occurs at Măguricea and Rupturi-Pe (otherwise known as V.Ruptura) at Zahareşti. Near Valea Viei, Gârlici-Pe means literally a cellar entrance (since 'gârlici' indicates such a feature in southern Moldavian usage) but the expression is used here to convey the idea of a small narrow 'gorge' with landslides situated between two prominent hillocks that protrude like 'nunataks' near Stroeşti.

References to a precipice are very common typically (though not always) in the sense that – as with Maluri-Sub (under the precipice) at Sibiciu de Sus – young landslides are sourced under such circumstances. At Begu, Albu-Ma is the white precipice; at Calea Chiojdului Rp.Albă-La ('at the white precipice') applies to the northern side of În Vf.la Scumpie; while at Begu Ma.Sârbului (Sârbu's precipice) lies on the northern side of Şughiţa. At Fundăturile Ma.Feţii (the precipice of the face i.e. the south-facing slope) – also known as F.Coastei meaning the south-facing steep slope – is a dry, rocky precipice with a poor vegetation; at Gornet we have Ma.cu Cărţile (the precipice with the books) and Ma.Fătului (the psalm reader's precipice) although the significance of the names has been forgotten. At Lacu cu Anini, Ma.Roşu is the red precipice (from the colour of the strata) situated on Mu.Icoanei in the upper part of Gâ.Croitorului. At Muşcel, there is C.Ma.Feţii (the top of the precipice of the face i.e. F.Coastei) and Cp.Ma.Feţii (at the edge of the precipice of the face) at the western edge of Mu.Feţii, but the outstanding feature is Ma.Alb (the white precipice) – with an alternative name of Mu.Bălan, which has the same meaning – developed on non-resistant sandstone: a similar feature (also named Ma.Alb) occurs near Pătârlagele and also at Sibiciu de Jos with Rp.Alb as

an alternative. At Mânăstirea Dl.Râpilor (the hill of the precipices) is a branch of Cornet peak extending to Dl.Mânăstirii (part of the summit known locally as Mu.Nițului); at Mărunțișu, Rp.Corbului (the raven's precipice) lies south-west of Valea Seacă on gravel at the source of V.Corbului, while Ru.Malului-Sub (below the hillside precipice) occurs south of the Sila landslide with forest/pasture. At Plăișor there is Ma.Lung (the long precipice) and also Maluri-Pe ('on the precipice'); while at Pănătău there is C.Babeților (Babeți precipice) and Ma.Diaconesei (Diaconița's precipice) and Maluri-Pe În Fund ('on the precipice' or 'near the edge of the precipice'). Ma.cu Cătină (the precipice with buckthorn) occurs at Sibiciu de Sus, Valea Lupului has Ma.Hărhădăului (the precipice of Hărhădău) and Zaharești has Ma.Dârstei (Dârste's precipice): a 50m precipice in thick porous sandstone on the northwestern part of Dl.Dârstei (while Apa Ma.Dârstei – the water or brook of Dârste's precipice) is a quite enigmatic reference since there is no obvious sign of water here, but only a channel of the Buzău river flowing at the foot of the bluff or precipice marking the bank of the river north of Zaharești. There are also several other references near this village: Dl.Malului: the hill of the precipice; I. Malului: the brook of the precipice; Ma.Mare: the great precipice and C.Ma.Mare: at the edge of the great precipice.

Reference should also be made to depressions or 'hollows' often highlighted as 'Gropi' (the hollows) which occurs at Gornet in relation to four small valleys with pasture on landslides near the source of I.Fulgoiu west-north-west of Blidișel. Groapă-Pe ('in the hollow') is known near Pănătău. Such hollows are relatively sheltered and particularly favourable for agriculture: hence the name Căldura/V.Căldurei (a

warm place) 3.0kms east of Pănătău a small gently-sloping depression on landslides east of Mu. Icoanei that is particularly good for hay but also used for pasture and fruit trees. At Begu we have G.Baciului (Baciu depression, derived from 'băci': a shepherd in charge of a sheepfold) relating to a small depression north of Sila; while at Calea Chiojdului, Leurdiș/G.Leurdișului (the hollow place of the leurdiș – from the 'leurdă' plant or bear's garlic) is a particularly appropriate name for a short, wide valley with landslides and a moist soil. Also G.cu Salcie (the hollow with the white willow tree) is known at Brusturișu (Mușcel) while G.Dușilor (Duși's hollow) lies in the same area north of Malul Alb in a valley cut in clay strata between vertically-inclined resistant but porous rock. At Râpile we have G.cu Scoruș (a hollow formerly with the service tree: 'scoruș') in a dry valley with landslides north of the Puntea pe Sufe road and south of Mociornița;

While I.Blidarilor indicates the brook of the bowls (from 'blidari') near Zaharești: a name that makes good sense with the bowls as depressions in a landslide area. Roghina/Roghini-La is a small depression on landslides (made by wild boar) on an old landslide in the upper part of V.Mânăstirii (Cârnelui) holding an almost permanent supply of water well used by wild boar from a former forest nearby and still useful for livestock in dry summers. Finally at Tega V.Vizuinilor: valley of the hollow/burrow.

The hollows may hold small lakes often used in the past for retting flax and hemp. At Lacu cu Anini we have Lacuri-La ('at the lakes') relating to four small lakes aligned north-west to south-east below Mu. lui summit southeast of Vlaicești; and in the same area

Lacuri-La În Vf ('at the lakes on the peak') involves two former lakes (now marshes) with a distinctive vegetation on old landslides near a hilltop south of G.Baciului peak. Lacuri-La also occurs at Crâng alluding to a lake on landslides above Sm.Murăturilor; also at Fundăturile for former lakes near La Ogradă on landslides in the lower part of I.lui Tatomir. And in Stroești, the great lake on landslides in the forest (L-al Mare, but documented as I.Rău in 1900) was formerly valued for retting; while the same name appears southeast of Zaharești near Blidișei. In Valea Lupului we have Lacurile de Jos (below lakes) for former ponds on old landslides at Pn.Cheii, while Lacurile de Sus (above lakes) appear just to the south in a moist landslide depression. The name Lacuri-La (at the lake) occurs at Crâng with regard to a lake on landslides above Saramura. And in Valea Viei where Lac-La means 'at the lakes' – a seasonally marshy area on the Lunca Țarinei east of Dl.Viei – there is also the name Broșteanca (derived from 'broască/broaște' meaning a frog): very appropriate for a place where moist soil in spring provides a good environment for frogs. Another case of dampness at Gornet is expressed through Mustoaia (derived from 'a musti' meaning spread i.e. soil spread) which is a small valley and agricultural surface that is damp in spring and used for hay, pasture and fruit trees; while Mu.Mustoii nearby is the summit of Mustoaia.

At Râpile, Gorâniș-I. (Mociornița) relates to a wet but stable landslide area with a moist black soil resting on marl and Mociornița appears at Mu.Pătârlagelor near Fundăturile and also at Mânăstirea. Several lakes have their own name as with L.lui Dedu (Dedu's lake, probably referring to a former owner) on old landslides near Măguriceai; at Pănătău, L.Babeșilor alludes to some ten small

lakes on landslides formerly used for retting; likewise L.lui Coman (Coman's lake) at Valea Fântâni; and L.Bănică/lui Bănică (Bănică's lake: probably a nickname) at Valea Viei situated on old landslides on the west side of Dl.Viei. L.Cârnelui is a former lake situated below the monastery; while L.Scumpiei, on old landslides near Calea Chiojdului, is named Scumpii-Intre (between the smoke trees) referring to a slope on landslides presumably so named after the dry, warm soils required for this tree had been quite forgotten!

References to Forest Clearance

There is much evidence of forest clearance, expressed in different ways but most commonly through the word 'poiana' abbreviated Pn as already noted e.g. Pn.Cheii is the clearing of the gorge referring to hay/pasture land on landslides in a narrow 'cheia' of V.Rea at Valea Lupului; while Pn.Mare (the great clearing) is known at Plăișor and Pn.Ulului (elm clearing) is a place where a solitary elm remains to indicate former forest in area of moist soil at Râpile. But 'Lazu' (Lz) is a good indicator of farmland recently cleared e.g. Laz-Sub indicates at Zăhărești (though the deforestation occurred in the relatively distant past) while Mu.Lazului in the same area is a deforested summit now used for fruit trees, hay and pasture. 'Lazuri' appears in the Begu area with reference to a steep slope on Blidișel where degraded pasture was replanted in the communist period as a pine forest. In the Maguricea area, V.Lazului is a valley with recently-deforested land while Dl.Lazului (the deforested hill) is known at Lunca. Another indicator is Curături-În/La meaning 'at the recently deforested land' north of Corcoianu, while Poienița is used at Măguricea to indicate a small clearing and

Vf. Cremenîşului (835m: a hilltop southeast of Vf. Pătârlagelor) is the deforested peak with fragments of silicious stone ('cremene' means quartz) at Calea Chiojdului; with reinforcement from the alternative names of Lz.Chei (the deforested land of the gorge) and Lz.Luţii (the deforested surface of Luţa). Seciu occurs at Maruntisu area in respect of land below Vf.Parului (in the upper part of V.Pătrana) deforested by 'seciuire' i.e removing a ring of bark from the tree trunk. This element, which is common throughout the Subcarpathians, also occurs as G.Seciului (the hollow on Seciu hill) and as Dl.Seciu (the deforested hill) near Râpile; not to mention I.Seciului – a spring on deforested land – at Stroeşti. At Tega, Cătină Arsă-La ('at the burnt cătină') is a reference to the clearance of scrub from poor pastureland by burning. The clearing names are often associated with particular people: Pn.Albului is Albu's clearing on old landslides at Zahareşti; while Pn.Hozii (Hosa's clearing) is a long-established and well-known clearing on old landslides used for fruit trees owned by local Roma.at Mânăstirea (indeed during the communist period a local festival was held there on the Tuesday or Thursday after Easter). Pn.Manii (Manea's clearing) is known at Plăişor. Pn.Radului (Radu's clearing) occurs at Valea Lupului; also Pn.Silei (Sila's clearing) at Pănătău and V.Pn.Sinciului (the valley of Sinciu's clearing) at Zahareşti. Lz.Benghii at Lunca is Benga's deforested hill and finally reference should be made to three small clearings in the Mărunţişu area (Pn.Gherghii, Pn.Homocii and Pn.lui Ilie) that relate to families seeking refuge in the forest in order to avoid the tax collectors ('dabilari') who would be reluctant to search for people in such remote places, being fearful for their own security.

Some names indicate forests that no longer exist, as at Râpile where Pd.Chiliile Schitului is the forest of the hermitage cells: a former monastic forest but now relict woodland and a large clearing consisting of scrub and poor pasture northeast of Cârnu monastery. In the same area Pd.Gorâniş or Gorâniş-La (Mociorniţa) refers to a former forest of evergreen forest of 'gorun' (*Quercus petraea*) on the south-facing side of a low summit with dry soil (good for 'gorun') contrasting with the damp Mociorniţa favourable for 'stejar' (*Quercus robur*). Meanwhile Vf.Gorânului – the peak of the evergreen oak – recalls former woodland at Crâng (where the landslides have been exploited for farming). There are also many references to single trees (e.g. Vf.Bradului, meaning the peak of the fir tree) or perhaps small groups, as at Begu where Mesteceni-La means 'at the birch trees'. These names may be significant for an almost total lack of woodland although they could point to woodland in the past. Indeed at Mesteceni-La there is a hint of deforestation because erosion has occurred and the summit surface is vaulted in the shape of a cupola. But substantial areas of forest remain – augmented under communism at places such as Blidisel, Dl.Mânăstirii, Ds.Pănătăului, Ds.Plăişorului, Valea Fântânii as well as sites above Crivineni, Muşcel, Țoca and Valea Seacă. Go.Popii – the priest's evergreens, situated 1.40km.east of Plăişor – is an evergreen forest (of *Quercus petraea*) on Dl.Plăişorului (below Mu.Priporului) with dry soil good for this vegetation; Sălcuiş is the forest of willow trees 0.60km.east-south-east of Plăişor in a damp area in the centre of the Plăişor basin; and V.Rea Pd (the forest of V.Rea) is situated in the upper part of the valley near Valea Lupului. Other forests are: Pd. Brăduleşului (Brăduleşu forest) at

Poienile; Pd.Crețuleștii (Crețuleasca's forest) northwest of Mânăstirea on the north-eastern part of Vf.Cornetului and Vf.Vădalei; Fagul Înalt (the peak at the high beech) lies at Țoca where the land above the alluvial plain is well-wooded (with some plantations in the communist period); Fulgoaia-Pd. (the forest of Fulgoaia) and Ch.Fulgoii (Fulgoaia's forested steep slope) at Gornet; Pd.Ch.Goșa is on the north-eastern side of Blidișel between Predeal and Valea Sibiciului; Pd.Marului (the forest of the apple trees) is near Cârnu, although the trees are actually limes; Pd.Piscupeasca (the bishop's forest) lies north-west of Mărunțișu; Pd.Ștubeu is near Sibiciu de Sus, Pd.Țoca is close to the village of this name; Pd.Vărbilei – the forest of Vărbilau (after the monastery in Prahova) – is situated in the northeastern part of Vf. Cornetului near Stroești; Pd.Vărbilei (the forest of Vărbilau: after the monastery in Prahova) is situated in the northeastern part of Vf. Cornetului near Stroești; and Pd.Vărzăria (cabbage garden forest) occurs in the upper part of Sărățel (Goșa) near Valea Fântâni.

Farming

First we see that there are names relating to the structural surfaces that were more intensively used in the nineteenth century e.g. terraced lands at Comori and La Inuri ('at the flax') above Corcoianu. Also we have Pn. Ulmului above Râpile and Dl.Mânăstirii above Fundăturile where today the emphasis is on hay, pasture and fruit growing hay with some partial return to woodland. There were also agricultural opportunities on old landslides as

at Pănătău, Tega and Zaharești. But of course the premier agricultural lands continued to be the river terraces and alluvial plains known as 'lunca' (in the old sense of an agricultural surface) or 'țarine': found

in every village to varying degrees e.g. the 25-30m alluvial plain at Valea Viei extending from the right side of the Mușcel stream to the left side of the Gorneasca east of Dl.Viei and Dl.Mânăstirii. Ț.Luncii was a highly prized agricultural surface for local peasants when it was made available under the land reform of 1923 and used especially for fruit trees (with cereals land provided simultaneously in the plain). Luncă-Pe is the expression used by the people of Begu for such surfaces while their neighbours nearby at Corcoianu talk of Poduri-Pe for the same areas; while at Calea Chiojdului, Po.lui Huhui – the platform of Huhui – is a small horizontal surface northeast of Cp.Dealului north of Brusturișu; and at Lacu cu Anini Plai-În means the tableland on the hill. Steps on these surfaces may be highlighted in view of the value of natural terracing: Pănătău's Șețu'al Mare/Mic alludes to the great and little 'steps'. At Valea Lupului Pod-Pe is used for the geomorphological terrace above C.Mică on what is otherwise a steeply-sloping hillside (currently used for fruit trees) and the same situation arises at Mânăstirea in respect of the small plateau or step on the summit between Cornet and Mu.Nițului. And at Lunca the name Pd.Po.Roșu – the (former) forest of the red plateau 1.00km west of Benga Veche – is a step-like feature on Benga hill (the south-eastern side of Dl.Mânăstirii) representing a small remnant of old relief. Tega people use C.Plaiului for their 'plai' above Cuculești below the summit of Dl.Cârnelui, while Mu.Plaiului at Poienile denotes the summit of the 'plai', with particular reference to a local trackway. At Zaharești Fășii-Pe ('on the strip') refers to the structural surface below Potop's farm, while at Valea Lupului the term Cheie/Cheia (from the Latin 'claves') is in use for a sandstone gorge comprising the middle part of V.Rea

including the depression of Pn.Cheii sculptured in clay and marl.

Farming: Crops

Cereals used to be grown on unstable areas of young landslides where now used only for hay, pasture, orchards or forest e.g. on the left side of the Sibiciu stream north of Gornet (Fulgoaia/Goşa), the upper V.Viei basin (where some maize has been grown quite recently) and also Ț.Văii Vie east of Dl.Viei. Other examples are Poduri above Corcoianu; the old ‘țarină’ in Pănătău village; and the ‘țarină’ below Tega. At Begu there is the reference La Orzari (‘at the barley’) and in the case of Dl.Linții near Begu there could be a link with former cereal cultivation through the meaning of ‘linte’ as lentil. But much more significant are the references to La Mălae, literally meaning ‘at the maize’ but often used as a reference to cereals in general: ‘mălai’ (maize cake); ‘mei’ (millet) and later American corn (‘porumb’). However there are complications because Mălaia/Mălaia-La/Pe – occurring in connection with a landslide and structural surface at Lacu cu Anini (300m northwest of Slabi) has also been associated with cereal growing, although it is quite a different expression from Mălaele/Mălae-La: indeed it is quite meaningless, although there is a mountain of this name in Buzău county. The same anomaly also appears in an agricultural context in two other places locally: 0.75km.southeast of Plaișor on a hilltop on the left side of I.Plaișorului and also 1.30km north-east of Zaharești on Dl.Spoelii on land that is now forested. However it seems quite likely that there is a confusion and that ‘mălaia’ may be accepted as evidence of former cereal growing, but confusion arises because while Iorgulescu

makes a clear reference to cereal growing using ‘La Mălae’ – indeed he also uses Mălaele Mici (the small ‘mălae’) for an area near Zaharești that cannot be exactly located – local people use the enigmatic term ‘Mălaia’ which local ‘experts’ validate to the extent of believing that it is Iorgulescu’s version that is erroneous! Former agriculture is also indicated Vf.La Altoaie (on the peak at the stock plant) near Crâng, but even more convincingly by evidence of threshing at an ‘arie’ where daught animals trampled the crop at certain places in the fields before the chaff was removed by the wind using a wooden shovel.

Several high ground locations are known where a light breeze would be very helpful for winnowing, as in the case of A.Pe Muchie-La (‘at the threshing on the summit’): relating to two places near Râpile with former agricultural surfaces on the higher ground. Further examples are: A.lui Mitu Pavel-La (‘at the threshing of Mitu Pavel’) at Zaharești; Arie-Sub (‘below the threshing floor’) at Plăișor; while Arie-La pe Mu. or În Vf. La Arie point to a former threshing place near the summit of Dl.Mănăstirii. Particularly impressive are the two references to În Vf. la A.Lupenilor (‘on the peak at the threshing place of the Lupeni’ i.e. natives of Valea Lupului) on land that they owned on Vf.Mușcelului: hence the alternative name Mușcel-ÎnVf.Pe (‘on Mușcelul peak at the threshing by the Lupeni’). Al.Duță also claims knowledge of examples of ‘arie’ from the high ground on the edge of our area near Muscelu-Țigan and at Valea Fântânii. Furthermore V.Veghiului (Veghiu’s valley) on the left side of V.Ghimpelui could be connected with Veghi-La (‘at Veghi’s are’): the threshing place once used by a local farmer near Plăișor occupying a relatively

large holding on the left side of I.Croitorului extending southeast to Ru.Simei and Mu.Priporului. Finally – since the peasants used to produce their own clothing - cropping on the high ground included flax and hemp: hence Inuri-La ('at the flax') north of Corcoianu, while Inul Dedului ('Dedu's flax') points to former cultivation above Valea Lupului on the left side of V.Mardale near the summit. Ogoare-La ('at the cultivated land') relates to hemp growing on Dl.Mănăstirea where Inărie-La ('at the flax') also occurs. References to hemp ('cânepă') are relatively rare because this plant was usually restricted to gardens for better protection against birds although the retting was carried out where suitable ponds were available. Lastly, although vegetables have not been of great importance Vărzăria (a cabbage garden) occurs at Predeal near Valea Fântânii north of Blidișel on the upper Sărățel brook and in the Balosin basin at Poiana (Mușcel), while Vărzăria Mare/Mică (the large and small cabbage gardens) are known in the area between Gornet and Sibiciu de Sus).

Farming: Stockrearing and Fruit Growing

There are many references to grazing: at Begu, Rotocol-La (the round area) is a gently-sloping pasture on F.Begului; at Gornet, Pleșuva (the summit with pasture derived from the Bulgarian language) is the peak of a small deforested hill; while at Mărunțișu, Sila (a clearing with pasture) comprises a small area of young landslides with pasture and alder bushes at the source of the Sila landslide below Vătaie. Fâneță/Fâneța indicates hayland on young landslides (also used for fruit trees) in the area of Orjani and Stroești/Valea Viei: an area indicated by the name Pr.Fâneții (hayfield gate) at the upper limit of Valea Viei giving access

to the village's hayfields as early as the Medieval period. At Tega, Fânețe refers to hay produced above the 'țarină' on old landslides (which were less favourable for agriculture) extending westwards from La Berhuleasa; similarly Fâ.Mărunțișenilor ('the hayland of Mărunțișu's people') comprising the western slope of the Poduri 'țarină'; while at Zaharești, Mal-Sub (under the precipice) is a small asymmetrical valley with pasture and buckthorn scrub on landslides. On the opposite side of the Buzău valley, Fa.Mare a Mș.Pătărlagelor is the great hayland of Mușcel: comprising a large part of Mu.Pătărlagelor where former use for crops and fruit trees is indicated by such names La Arie and La Altoaie. There are few names relating to horses and cattle, although Vf.Juncului is the peak of the young bullock near Valea Fântânii and there are three names relating to an area east of Vlaicești (Lacu cu Anini): Văcăria means hill grazing for many cows, Mu.Văcăriei is the summit of the cows (with pasture above steep slopes) and I.Văcăriei is the brook or spring of the cows on the right side of the Pănătău brook. O.Cailor (the horse pen) recalls an 'obor' for monastery horses on the Ariniș landscape near Mănăstirea, while the once common practice of having all the pigs in a village graze on common land is recalled through Cotinețe La ('at the pigsty') on the right side of V.Mardale/Mardare on the slope below the Mușcelu Lupenilor plateau at Valea Lupului; also at Poienile V.Purcăreața means swineherd's valley. And an apiary belonging to the former Mănăstirea hermitage used to exist in Zaharești on Dl.Stupinei (the hill of the beehive) while V.Stupinei means apiary valley and Stupini-În means 'in the apiary': a large area of undulating south-facing land near the summit of Mu.Lazului where the apiary was actually situated.

However there are numerous references to sheep: at Măguricea Sn.Coceneștilor is the sheepfold of Cocenești which is a nickname derived from ‘cocină’ meaning a pigsty); at Valea Fântânii Od.lui Dabija is Dabija’s sheepfarm: referring to a rich family from Valea Sibiciului who used to have land north-north-west of Predeal that now used only for hay; and at Mărunțișu, V.Stanciului is Stanciu’s valley where there was once a sheepfold (although it is not known if Stanciu was the shepherd). Then there are valleys, springs and farmlands connected with sheep: I.Brânzei (cheese valley) lies in the upper part of Valea Fântânii while G.Baciului (the shepherd’s hollow) at Gornet has already been noted. Mocanu-M is Mocan’s mountain (after ‘mocan’: a Transylvanian shepherd), while the female form – Mocanca – also features as shepherd’s farm (combined with traditional vine planting by Transylvanian settlers) at Mănăstirea. I.Odăii (the brook/spring of the ‘odaie’ or sheep farm) appears at Râpile and C.Stânei (at the slope of the sheepfold) is known at Zaharești. Ps.Stâanii (the summit with a sheepfold) relates to Dl.Viei, although there is no sheepfold there now and it is not known when one last existed; likewise in the case of Vf.Stâanii (sheepfold peak) also situated on Dl.Viei close to Crâng – appearing also at Măguricea with respect to a waved surface on the right side of I.Chiliei); also at Poienile to the southeast of Vf.Cornetului, at Valea Lupului to the west of Dl.Mirodina (an area now forested) and also at Valea Viei (Dl.Mănăstirii). Finally, V.Stânei (sheepfold valley) is an intermittent brook extending from Vf.Stânei to the Bâsca Chiojdului at Țoca while I.La Surlă at Calea Chiojdului relates to a brook associated with a ‘surlă’ which a conical-shaped shepherd’s refuge.

Particularly interesting for fruit growing is the tradition of viticulture which was retained until the phylloxera epidemic at the end of the nineteenth century. At Pănătău, Vii-La (‘at the vineyard’) relates to former landuse north of Corcoianu while Po.Viei at Sibiciu de Sus is a tableland with a former vineyard north of the village. But the best examples come from Valea Viei where Dl.Viei (vineyard hill) refers to extensive vineyards in the past along with V.Viei (vineyard valley) and Pr.Viei (vineyard gate) with the latter recalling a former gateway giving entrance to the village. During the last century plums, apples and pears have been the most prominent fruits: hence C.Pomilor (the slope of the fruit trees) at Sibiciu de Sus in an area of old landslide activity 1.0km east-north-east of the village that is especially good for plum trees; also G.Pomilor (500m north-north-east) is the hollow of the fruit trees, while Cuptoare-După (after the oven) is probably a reference to the former practice of drying plums in an oven. At Valea Sibiciului, Pm.Goșii (the fruit tree of Goșa) relates to fruit trees on the southern part of Goșa hill; and in Valea Viei Pr.Oancei is Oancea’s plum tree. At Begu, I.La Șapte Meri is the brook or spring of the seven apple trees while Meri-La (‘at the apple trees’) relates to a south-facing surface east-north-east of Vlăicești (Lac cu Anini). At Valea Lupului Vf.Părului is the peak of the pear tree in the upper part of V.Rea while at Mușcel there is a reference to Povarnă-La (‘at the brandy distillery’) which is still in regular use at Mihălcești. It should be noted that commercial fruit growing was a priority under communism when several new orchards were established e.g. Ț.Lupenilor (the ‘țarină’ or agricultural surface of the Valea Lupului people), while near Pănătău, Măracineni-La (‘at Măracineni

hamlet', now derelict) recalls a gently-sloping landslide similarly taken over.

Farming Families and Associated Activities

Many names survive which indicate specific domains (farms or estates) impinging on high surfaces and landslides. Mu/Vf.Michia (at 747m) is an alternative name for Mu/Vf.Pănătăului and means Michia summit or ridge; deriving from the old estate of Michia in Cozieni commune (outside our study area) and was probably used by the people on the eastern (Bălănești) side of the summit. Also in the Pănătău area is the name Popa Gheorghe-În/La (at the priest Gheorghe's land) situated between Corcoianu and Mărăcineni, while Pastramă-La ('at the land of Pastramă: probably a curious nickname with allusions to smoke-dried salted meat!) embraces a structural surface with landslides. And in the same locality we also have the sense of private places closed to the general public for Braniștea Mare is the great or high 'braniște': a large enclosed comprising a gently-sloping summit surface now used for hay, pasture and fruit trees but almost certainly cropped in the past (a situation repeated just below at Braniștea Mică – the small or low 'braniște'). We encounter Geroasa as an estate name at Maguricea where Stoenеști-La (the land of the Stoenеști family) applies to a 'waved' agricultural surface currently used for hay and pasture. At Begu, a former owner named Bozioreanu indicates a link with Bozioru, while at Gornet we have Șerbeticu (a small hill with 4.0ha woodland and pasture) and Vf.Țăcnei which means Țăcna's summit. Șughіța refers to land (currently pasture) in I.Croitorului (Plăișor), while Streaua and Șelari are both old holdings on separate hills at Tega, where Cărlig-La ('at Hook's place') concerns an old landslide now

used for hay, pasture and fruit trees. In the Stroești area Duru-La ('at Duru's farm') recalls a Szekler settler from Transylvania, while C.Odăii ('the slope of the room') relates to the Duru family home. These domains clearly encompass high surfaces and landslides. Goșa/Pn.Goși relates to a former estate near Valea Sibiciului comprising a large clearing on young, unstable landslides now used only for hay and pasture and in Valea Lupului V.Mardalelor (probably derived from a man's name) refers to both an estate and a valley that is now used for pasture and forest and pasture.

Associated Activities, Farm Roads and Trackways

Water-powered milling took place along the Buzău valley with Mo.Sibicianului (Sibicianu's mill) at Sibiciu de Sus, while the location Moară-La ('at the water mill') relates to four separate water-powered mills: two near Mărunțișu – one at Bana once belonging to the priest Alexandru Ionescu and the other 250m to the north belonging to his brother Ion Ionescu; also Moara Butoeștilor on the former Mărunțișu-Pătârlagele commune boundary; and the mill of Ghiorghița Ionescu at Poienile on the boundary with Cislău. Other traditional activities are indicated by G.Pietrarului (stone cutter's hollow) north of Crâng near Chichile peak, while I.Cojocarului (furrier's brook) appears at Valea Lupului and I.Croitorului' (tailor's brook) at Plăișor. Ma.Dârstei (from the Bulgarian 'drastelo') means the precipice by the fulling mill, alluding to the former importance of local cloth production; while La Stupărie points to the apiary north of Zaharești maintained by monks from Mănăstirea hermitage. Most impressive however are the references to pluriactivity at Mărunțișu which seems to have been

noted for its craftsmanship in the nineteenth century in which context this former ‘clăcași’ village, with very limited land for agriculture, may even have had a complementary role to Pătarlagele as a leading centre for some items of business. In addition to ‘Moara Butoeștilor’ already mentioned, ‘La Rotărie’ (at the wheelwright) occurs in the forest nearby Mărunțișu; likewise ‘La Strugărie’ relating to lathe workshop (‘strungărie’). From ‘doagă’ (a stave) comes the names V.Dogarului just west of Mărunțișu, while the female equivalent of V.Dogăriței appears on the left side of Sărățel brook: hence we have references to both a cooper and a cooper’s wife. And finally, again in woodland, Vf.Vădale provides a probable reference to weaving. While the main valley was served by a main road and eventually a railway branch line, the high ground needed a network of trackways and footpaths, endowed by a number of water fountains and wayside crosses asych as. Cr.lui Talete (Talete’s cross) situated near the track connecting the Fulgoaia and Goșa clearings north of Vf.Blidișel near Valea Sibiciului. Cr.Mățării (Mățara cross) stands near the track from Predeal to Goșa clearing and the Mățara hamlet of Muscelu Cărmănesc; while Cr.Banului in stone (the cross of the ban: a high official) stands at the col where DI.Murăturilor/DI.Viei is crossed by the path between the Mușcel and Viei valleys. Above Fundaturile, Cr.din Curmătură-La (the cross from the col) stands by the trackway from Crivineni which provides an alternative to the road along the Mușcel valley from Pătarlagele. Cr.Plaiului (the cross of the ‘plai’) is situated near the col north of Begu negotiated by the Valea Fântânii-Bălănești track. Other references are Linia, used at Predeal (above Valea Fântânii) for the cart track from Begu to the northern side of Mu.Blidișelului; while at Valea Lupului, Ps.Țiganului (Roma summit) relates to the

hillslope falling from Vf.Mușcelului to V.Lupului with a former cart track for hay and other traffic connecting Mușcel with Valea Lupului.

Conclusion

We have shown that there is a rich toponymy relating to landscape and land use in the Pătarlagele Depression and this is particularly valuable given the lack of documentary evidence on a period of heavy population pressure on the land resources in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when subsistence agriculture was forced to make the fullest use of the high ground: both the fragments of old relief and the extensive landslide-covered hillsides. Clearly the origin of the names used for many landscape features and specific agricultural spaces is a matter for speculation, especially since the many personal names are long forgotten and tracing them is almost impossible since many appear to be nicknames that are otherwise unrecorded. But the fact that most of the relevant settlements were initiated in the nineteenth century suggests that many of the names date to this period and thereby provide insights into a remarkable phase of settlement extension in the already well-settled Subcarpathian region. It is often quite possible to combine the toponymy with today’s landscape survivals - as in the case of the suite of terraces above Corcoianu: an area known as Poduri where locals used to refer to specific locations as Inuri-La (‘at the flax’) and Vii-La (‘at the vineyard’); suggesting that there are some resources here for the promotion of the area for rural tourism given the potential for hill-walking. Ever since the resettlement projects sponsored by the communist

cooperatives in the 1960s the population in the hills has been declining quite rapidly and although the radical 'sistemizare' programme was overtaken by the 1989 revolution, the problems of developing infrastructure and safeguarding property on unstable hillslopes are unlikely to prevent further decline although Begu and Muşcel are still substantial communities with local services. It is therefore appropriate to record as much as possible about the changing economy of the hills, complemented by the social and religious life of the vibrant communities that were sustained in this challenging environment.

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Figure 1 The origin of settlements in the Patarlagele Depression according to the earliest documentary evidence.

Named settlements are those with a history of official existence in administrative handbooks since the late nineteenth century. Those coded by numbers are dependencies, as follows (with subordination indicated in terms of the late nineteenth century situation and also the present situation, allowing for consolidation of the official list): 1 Arvunești (Corcoianu/Pănătău); 3 Băcioi (Babeți/Pănătău); 4 Băia (Begu); 5 Băicuș (Begu); 6 Băjăni (Corcoianu/Pănătău); 7 Balea (Pănătău); 9 Bărbulești (Valea Viei); 10 Băscureț (Sibiciu de Sus); 12 Bejani (Zaharești); 13 Benga (Lunca); 14 Bogdănești (Zaharești); 17 Burdușoaia (Valea Sibiciului); 20 Cătunul Bisericii (Mușcel); 21 Cetate (Crâng); 22 Chelărești (Stroești); 23 Copăcelul (Orjani/Stroești); 30 Dubrovești (Măguricea); 32 Gârlă (Mușcel); 34 Gorlani (Măguricea); 36 Ivănești (Stroești); 37 La Cătină (Botești/Begu); 39 La Mănăstire în Țigănie; 40 La Odae (Valea Fântânii/Pănătău); 41 Lemnărești (Valea Viei); 42 Linie (Zaharești); 44 Luntrari (Râpile); 48 Malul Alb (Crivineni/Patarlagele); 51 Mănăstirea Cârnu

(Tega); 52 Mărăcineni (Corcoianu/Pănătău); 54 Mărunțișu Jitianu (Mărunțișu); 55 Mărunțișu Sibiesc (Mărunțișu); 56 Mățara (Valea Sibiciului); 58 Mlăcile (Drăgănoi/Sibiciu de Sus); 59 Moara Sibicianului (Drăgănoi/Sibiciu de Sus); 62 Murea (Stroești); 65 Pâcle (Poiana/Mușcel); 67 Panaieți (Măguricea); 69 Pâslari (Râpile); 71 Pătârlagele de Jos (Pătârlagele); 72 Pătârlagele de Sus (Pătârlagele); 73 Pe Crivină (Plăișor); 74 Pe Față (Râpile); 75 Pe Muchie (Zaharești); 76 Pe Pisc (Măguricea); 77 Peste Gârlă (Valea Sibiciului); 78 Peste Izvor (Gornet); 79 Peste Izvor (Bejani/Zaharești); 81 Podosu (Stroești); 82 Podul Viei (Valea Sibiciului); 83 Poduri (Tega); 85 Poiana (Valea Fântânii/Pănătău); 89 Potorăști (Stroești); 90 Predeal (Valea Fântânii/Pănătău); 91 Pripor (Pănătău); 92 Prundeni (Pătârlagele); 93 Racoș (Zaharești); 95 Redeny (Poienile de Jos); 96 Robu (Gornet); Rotărie (Plăișor); 98 Satu Nou (Mărunțișu); 102 Slabi (Lacu cu Anini); 103 Șoghiorani (Stroești); 106 Țarină (Pănătău); 107 Țarină de-din Jos (Sibiciu de Jos); 111 Valea Gornetului (Mărunțișu); 117 Vasiloi (Stroești); 118 Vlăicești (Lacu cu Anini).