

## **The Influence of Social and Political Context and Ideology on Naming in the XX Century**

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### **Abstract**

The growing interest recently to self-identification and self-determination was reflected in studying the linguistic aspects of naming from the diachronic and synchronic positions. That is why the analysis of process of choosing names during the XXth century is conducted in this article for the example of different national cultures. If at the beginning of the century the amount of the given names was restricted mainly by the religious and traditional motives, at the end of the XXth century the diversity of names under the stability of traditional attitudes is growing steadily. As a result of the factor analysis it was determined that social factors play a significant role in that process, including the political situation, fashion, the language taste of the epoch, the peculiarities of world outlook in one or other culture. These aspects give the process of choosing the proper name national and cultural specifics, containing the social and ideological component. The article analyzes the trends of choosing proper names influenced by different extralinguistic conditions for the example of Spanish and Russian languages when using the comparative onomastic analysis. To derive the aforementioned processes the authors of the article conducted the statistical analysis on the base of different sources and concluded that the social and political context has the most significant influence on the process of naming under keeping the traditions of national culture.

**Keywords:** identity, anthroponym, tradition, globalisation, national, religion.

### **Introduction, hypothesis, aims and tasks**

During several centuries the set of names that was given to the human being at his (or her) birth was characterised by a special stability, was reglemented by the religion, national and family traditions. Nevertheless the anthroponymical stratum of lexis in the XX-XXI centuries is the most mobile and actively supplemented due to the mass media and changing during the life of the human being depending on the age, environment and other circumstances. Social and political trends, fashion, religion and the position in the society, national and cultural traditions etc. have an influence on it. Every name has its particular image formed during the history. Every people has its own history and equally with this each population has formed its own traditions of naming, which acquired a special construction and specifics since the ancient times. The change of names in the previous centuries was practised very rarely, in the European community most often it was connected with the religion.

The study of the influence of social and political context on the mechanism of naming we

see as the main task of this investigation.

The operating hypothesis of the study is the following. Despite the evident influence of the political discourse and fashion on naming, the share of traditionality has a significant weight. The changes connected with the process of naming have an evolutionary and not revolutionary nature. The study of this issue has an euristic potential, indirectly shows the degree of involvement of the individuals in the political agenda, reflects the societal ideals and their change, contributes to the study of ethnical, religious, regional and political identity. The aim of this study is to analyse the influence of social and political factor on the process of naming.

Methods and materials. When conducting this study the method of ethnographic field work, the structure and functional method, the factor analysis and the systemic approach were used. The sources of the National Institute of Statistics of Spain, of France, the normative acts, the data of the registry offices of the Russian Federation were used.

The historiography The problem of naming often attracted the attention of specialists of different profiles of social anthropologists, philologists, culturologists and historians. Beginning from the moment of forming of social anthropology naming was associated with animism and totemism (Taylor 1989), religion (Tokarev 1981, Vinogradov 2001). A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, speaking about the tabu of using the personal name of the baby by the newlyweds, mentioned that “the personal name is the symbol of social personality, that is the position taken by the individual in the social structure and social life” (Radcliffe-Brown 2001, p. 175). The avoidance of personal name is the symbolic recognition of the fact that the human being temporarily doesn't take the normal position in the social life. So, besides emphasising the certain function of the name in the social structure, we also speak about the name as a symbol empowered by a certain meaning. K. Geertz in the basic statements of his theory has concluded that “in the symbols the accumulation of senses occurs” (Geertz 2004, p. 150). Dividing the concepts of the picture of the world and the ethos of the people, the researcher emphasises the importance of relations between the values and the common structure of the life-being. The name should be attributed to the ethos of the people, because it is an important part of the type and the life style of the community. The name as a symbol is one of the most important components of forming the national, gender and religious identity.

### **The information volume of the proper name**

For the systemic solving of the tasks, it's necessary to specify the information volume of the anthroponym, its mono or polysemy. D.I. Yermolovich in the paper “The proper names at the intersection of languages and cultures” emphasises four kinds of information in the meaning of the proper names:

- habitual (or introductive) – the existence and the substance of the item being indicated. This component of the meaning presents a folded message: “There is such item.” This component is a common one for every item word characters — common nouns and proper ones.
- classifying (the belonging of the item to a certain class). We will call such class as a denotate of the name. For example, the denotates of the anthroponyms are the people, and the denotates of many anthroponyms also are the classes of men and women. This component of the meaning is a sort of the folded message: “This item is a person” (river, building etc.).
- individualising – special purpose of this name for naming one of the items within the denotate (such separate item is called “the referent of the name”).

- characterising – a set of features of the referent sufficient for the conversationalists to understand, what or who is meant. This component of meaning, for example, of proper name Niagara, presents a sort of folded message: this river flows in the Northern America and constitutes one of the biggest waterfalls in the world (Yermolovich 2001, p. 38).

Hence we can conclude that:

- 1) All the proper nouns have the meaning of objectivity, that is the part of their content (meaning) is a sort of existence of some item (or of substance, which we imagine as an item).
- 2) The proper nouns mean a sort of items, among which one item is emphasized specially.
- 3) The proper nouns, meaning a special item, set in their meaning an agreement, an arrangement to call this item in a special way.
- 4) The proper names bear some information about this item specifically and about its features. This information can be poor or rich and it can be known in different extent in different fields of communication. If this information becomes widespread in the scale of all the language collective, then it means that the data on this item are a part of the language meaning of the proper noun.

Professor V.S. Vinogradov, in his turn, pays attention to the fact that “in the literature translation the proper nouns don't only have the function of calling, naming the being or an object, but also are those few words, the form of which suggests the national belonging of the named item of thought” (Vinogradov 2001, p. 82). This statement allows us to empower the proper nouns with the following volume of information (starting from the same classification):

- 1) nominative information
- 2) sociolocal information
- 3) chronological information
- 4) background information

Here it's important to mention that the proper nouns are divided into two groups: common (natural) and semantic (allusive, “speaking”) proper nouns.

Speaking about sociolocal layer of the information volume of the proper noun, it presents worthwhile to emphasize the papers of Sellier, in which the French researcher compared the name with the tattooage, which stereotypicises the person's behaviour in the eyes of others (Sellier 2018, 2019). The distribution of one type names everywhere leads to a special stereotypical perception of individuals with the same names. The behaviour stereotypization also can be explained by the personal and behavioural characteristics of the known namesake. In this regard so-called “characteristics of the name”, which are often used by the future parents, as well as the people prone to superstitions to choose the name or to explain the availability of those or other features for one individual, emerge.

## **Results**

Over the centuries the community system predominated in the society. The economic order implied the survival of the collective. In this period a tradition to name in the honour of the died ancestors has formed. The religion also played a significant role in this process. The basic set of names was restricted to 30-40 items for each gender. The set of names, which could be given, was restricted by

the religious texts and family traditions, as well as by the social stratification (Bonnemère, P. 2008). This is approved by studying the metrical books of the Moscow spiritual consistory. The names are spread according to the months. So, the name “Vladimir “ appears presumably in June and July before the day of commemoration of the Saint Duke Vladimir, the name Iliya appears in July and August, the name Tatiana appears only in January and at the end of December. Such data on the other names existing in the Christian Calendar we can also find.

Special rituals of naming, with which the significant number of superstitions was connected, existed. The limited amount of names fostered the emergence of nicknames, surnames having predominantly patrilinear nature (Layne L. 1996). Within the social class system the quantity of given names was determined by the originality. So, the clear example of that can be the whole naming of the Spanish duchess Alba, who had 19 names: María del Rosario Cayetana Paloma Alfonsa Victoria Eugenia Fernanda Teresa Francisca de Paula Lourdes Antonia Josefa Fausta Rita Castor Dorotea Santa Esperanza Fitz-James Stuart y de Silva Falcó y Gurtubay. Meanwhile she liked to be named Cayetana, Tanya or Tanyta (GONZÁLEZ DORIA, F., (1994). *Diccionario heráldico y nobiliario*, Madrid: Bitácora).

With the transition to the capitalistic form of the economy with the development of the consumption society a significant variability in the naming emerges. The achievements of individuals, as well as the society as a whole contributed to the popularization and emergence of new names.

With the spreading of the total primary and general education the names variability increases significantly. We assume that it is connected with the emerging interest to the heroes of literature creatures, reading of history and other literature, with the total increase of the level of the population education.

Today according to the data of field work, when choosing the name, the parents often pay tribute to the died ancestors, famous people, study the meaning of the names on the respective resources (Darlu et al., 2012). Also it's necessary to emphasize the religious factor when choosing the name in the families of practising Christians or muslims (Klapisch-Zuber & Rothstein, 2017). So, in the Caucasian regions of the Russian Federation the traditions of naming are still kept, special customs surrounded by superstitions, according to which the name should be given to the baby during one week after the birth, otherwise the baby will be taken by shaitan, were found and proven.

During the XX century a series of political and social events contributed to the increase of the layer of anthroponymic lexics due to the emergence of new names, other names, to the contrary, were subject to ostracism and were put out of use (for example, name Adolf after the Second World War), that allows to speak about an anthroponymic revolution.

So, when changing the historical formation in the USSR in the 1920<sup>th</sup>s the names connected with the revolution and social events became widespread (Vladlen, Vilen from Vladimir Lenin, Marxen, Marxena from Marx and Engels, Dazdaperma from “Da zdravstvuet pervoye maya” (“Three cheers for the First of May!”), Ninel from Lenin vice versa). The process of naming differed significantly from the tradition that was before, but in it still a part of folk superstition that existed from the times of totemism, was kept (Galiullina 2008).

The popularity of revolutionary naming in the left movement of the Latin America should be emphasized specifically, where the reflection of political and ideological loyalty was demonstrated by the name. For example, the real historical person Vladimiro Il'ich Lenin, Montesinos Torres, the chief of the Peruan intelligence service, who took part in the disclosure of fraud of president Fuchimory. Il'ich Ramires Sanches, the international terrorist (the national front of saving Palestine,

the Red brigades etc.). It's interesting to note that in this family all the sons have got one of the names of V.I. Ulianov: the elder son has got the name Vladimir, the middle son has got the name Il'ich, the youngest has got the name Lenin). Lenin Boltaire Moreno Garcés, the former president of Ecuador (2017-2021), Reinaldo Gregorio Lenin Cerna Juárez, the sandinist, a close associate of the president of Nicaragua Daniel Ortega. It's interesting to note that in this family the communist ideology has reflected clearly when choosing the names (Salomon & Grosboll, 1986). So, the brother has got the name Engels, and the sister has got the name Crupskaya. Let's note that the choice of one or the other socially valuable phenomenon (in our case this is a precedented name) in the certain historical context went on without complying with grammatical rules of the initial language, which from the one hand, approves the importance of growing language contacts, and from the other hand, it is a sort of neglect of the language and culture rules, from which the borrowing occurs.

In 1890<sup>ths</sup> in France due to the festivities connected with one hundred jubilee of the Great French Revolution, such names as Mirabo, Barbaru, Danton, Robespier and even Ravasholl were widespread, and Le Figaro wrote about it on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 1893.

After the fist flight of the man to the outer space the name Youry has become very popular. In the Soviet Union a layer of names of Spanish nature (Dias, Alberto, Dolores) during the participation of the Soviet people in the civil war in Spain was found.

In 2017 according to the data of the registry offices of Moscow, three Donalds appeared in the city, and that fact was not fixed in the previous years. It is quite likely that this fact was connected with the president elections in the USA.

Now due to the development of postindustrial society, the decline of the communal system, which is felt presumably in the megapolities, the philosophy of individualism has got a great significance. The names, which are not typical for a specific society, become increasingly widespread. The development of mass culture in the second half of the XX century led to the popularization of the characters names of literature and cinema creatures. In 2014-2016 in Russia, France and Spain some hundreds of Deyneris, Arias and Tyreons were registered, and that was caused by the popularity of the serial "The throne game". The similar picture can be viewed in France in the end of the 1950<sup>ths</sup>, where after many years of popularity of the name Mary it changed to the name Brigitte, first, then to the name Katherine, and some years later the name Natalie became the most popular name. In the case of male names a large variability is traced, after the classical name Jean in 1989-1994 the name Kevin became the most popular name, and then Dilan (1995-1996) changed it.

### **The fashion as a innovative factor in the process of choosing the name**

A fashionable name is in such rank in the certain period of time and then it moves to the rank of scarce or escaped names. In the etiquette situation of naming, a subjective factor, which is a fashion, can play a significant role in this process. The opinion of relatives and close friends can influence on the fashionable choice (especially in the patriarchal families, where the people aim to keep the traditions) or the choice of the name by the famous or influential people (media influencers, for instance) or even the consultation on the forums in the Internet can influence that. This trend was present in the society in the epoch of Renaissance still. (Klapisch-Zuber, C., & Rothstein, M. 2017). The fashionable name usually relies upon the precedent texts and names (films, performers, heroes of literature creatures and even the participants of the advertisements) and can have the following characteristics: the mass character and the popularity of the initial hero

(a peculiar rating of spreading during a certain time period, for example Lenya Golubkov from advertisement “MMM” in due course. From the latter another feature, which is modernity opposed to the conservative trend to keep national and cultural originality which can be reflected in the religion custom of christening, as well as demonstrativeness, follows. In this case the excessive frequency, mass character can kill the demonstrativeness in its aim to stand out and show its individual originality. The etimological mystery (Deyneris) and exoticism (Dawn and Moon), which attract the people by their unusual nature in spite of the habitual system, can hide under the demonstrativeness. This can negatively reflect on the societal approval of such choice.

In the process of naming the choice can be executed not only in favour of the fashionable name, but also in favour of certain philosophical categories, of medical and professional terms. So, in 2021 in Moscow a newborn girl was named Psychosomatics.

Socially approved behaviour of individual is to choose for one's baby one of the names, which is natural for the society at the moment. The name is such marker of the society state, as the inflation indices or the value of GDP. It concerns the traditionality and rare names, which comprise the insignificant share, which is increasing for the recent time.

The change of economy nature, of the production forces to the economy of services, in which a man is a leading production force, leads to the situation, when the man must be remembered to communicate with the customer. For this task the certain name used at work can be chosen. A change of the name, according to the gathered field material, can be met most often among the representatives of the creative professions. So, the young choreographers-informants changed their names, Anastassiya changed her name to Athena, Mary changed her name to Joanna, and Elena changed her name to Aysedora. From this fact we can conclude that the profession matters to the name change. Such trend is especially clear in the area of mystically minded people, fortune tellers, magicians and espers, for which it is important to create the atmosphere of mystery by means of the name.

The trend, which is opposite to globalisation, is keeping and conservative trend, which is reflected in the search of ancient Slavonic, Roman, German names which are more and more given to the children by their parents. Such names as Yaropolk, Odiseus, Yermolay, Svetozar, Fredegonda, Segizmunda, Frumentsio, from the one hand, approve the trend towards national as an antithesis to the globalization process.

Behind the simple process of naming, which it seems to be, one can find a world-wide trend towards individualism. The big variability of names suggests that there is a shift from the community system to the other system, in which microgroups predominate. Within these microgroups the names, which comply with the interests of microcommunity become widespread. The number of autochthonous names in this case increases as opposing trend to globalization the trend towards national. Nevertheless the share of traditional names, according to the data of statistical organizations still has a significant specific weight.

Thus, the development of society, the change of social and politic system, decreasing (or in the theocratic societies, vice versa, increasing) of the religion influence, enlarging of language contacts, the worldwide globalization have the dual impact on the process of changing of the proper name: on the one hand, in the closed society the names borrowed from the other cultures can emerge, from the other hand, microsocieties can try to include the keeping function, that is to come back to the origins of national culture and to use the original names; in this case one should note that in any case the share of exotic, fashionable names appeared as a result of changes in the society always will be less than the traditional naming, comprising a large share in every language

collectives. That is approved by the conducted analysis and the statistical data. Though one should note that the diversity of names in the modern society is significantly higher, than before. It follows from this that we can make a conclusion about the syncretism of the mind of modern man of the European culture.

## Discussion

## Acknowledgements

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