

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO – PLACE NAMES AND STREET NAMES AS BORDER POSTS IN THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY (I)

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Abstract: An important subject of interest for human geographers has been, since at least Friedrich Ratzel's time, the link between geographical reality and the place-names. These 'fossils of human geography' (cf. Raoul Blanchard) have become nowadays increasingly attractive for the cultural geographers interested, among other issues, in explaining the impact of some political actions (for instance giving names with political connotations to different places, especially streets and other public places) on the collective memory. Authors' pedestrian trip (of almost 800 km) through the northern Spain along the St. James' Way has been both, an experience, of meeting special people from all around the world and, an opportunity to discover the Spanish 'place names envelope' - at home. In addition it created the right occasion for the author to reflect on the impact of recent law on 'Historic Memory' (La Ley de la Memoria Historica) of the street names. This paper analyses the places names and the street names of some settlements of St James' Way (Camino de Santiago) emphasising the sources of places names (historical, natural, economical, religious ones) and the actions of the local authorities to implement the central decisions in the field of street names. There are used limited amount of examples as the work is at its beginning.

Key words: Places names, Streets names, Political actions, Religious and historical aspects, St James' Way

Introduction

The idea of this study appeared on the wide north-Spanish places crossed in the summer of the years 2008 and 2009 in the context of pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Since in each locality where we were resting at the end of a stage remained a few hours of walking and contact with local reality, I considered properly to use this time to discover the names of the places from the local horizon (focus on streets' names). Gradually, I gathered an interesting material, used as well in my lectures to students.

As in the case of other spaces, the Toponymy of Spain represents a true archive which preserves the memory of some

situations from the past, closer or distant, situations which had impressed the inhabitants, marked their existence, remaining in the memory of inhabitants, being noted in written documents of various significations. Once noted – as "marks" of different parts of geographical reality – they acquired other significations as well than those of contributing to orientation / positioning of inhabitants in space. The mental component, of the symbol represented by these names, increased with the development of society.

In the real / particular case of the space where is registered Camino de Santiago (version *camino frances*) – route crossed by pilgrims all over the world for more than a thousand years – the significations of places' names exceed the simple reporting of Iberians to the space which they populate, offering

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interesting situations to those who are noted on *camino* due to cultural reasons. The resort to bibliographical sources and direct knowledge of appointed object remain obligatory conditions for a correct explanation of geographical names, of the significations incorporated by these during years. In the particular case of streets' names (odonyms), we deal with an intervention (with variable intensities) of authorities, the streets' names being most often used by inhabitants.

Taken as a whole, the names of places reflect the *variety* of natural environment, the process of population and the long action of active adjustment of communities to natural and social environment. At the same time, they represent a *part of the cultural patrimony* of a people, being necessary – in our case – to know the elements which created the *identity of Spain*. (fig. 1) It is approved – generally – the contribution of **four successive layers** of history, of culture and civilisation, which created the fundamental identity of Spain (Drimba, 2007, 7).

1. The first layer, that of Iberians (established in 2nd millennium before Christ), mixed with Celts (starting with VII century before Christ) – Celtic Iberians. From them remained names of rivers¹, the hydronyms being, as we know, the category of names of places most resistant to time erosion following the terms entered in the structure of some toponyms arrived, some of them changed, up to present: *berg* / “mountain, *briga* / “fortification” (ex. *Juliobriga* today Logrono), *briva* / “bridge” (ex. Brieva, near Najera), *bur*, *burr* / “head”, “peak”. In the same toponymic layer are also included the names of places resulted from euskerra (Basque), language isolated from the rest of European linguistic families. I bring now in discussion two oiconyms from Navarra² section of *camino* – *Zubiri* (zubi+iri, “village from the bridge”) and *Huarte* (<ura+arte, “water + land between waters”) reminding of the position of initial toft of this locality in the neighbourhood of Pamplona, in a wide meander of Arga river (Celdran, 2002, 903, 400).

2. The antic layer created / produced by Tyrians (including Carthaginians), Greeks and Romans. They shall incorporate urban accommodations among which Cadix (the

most famous town of Occidental Europe) and Malaga, founded by Tyrians under the name of Gadeira (romanised Gades, taken over by Arabians as Qadis) and respectively Mainake (the Romans named it Malaca) (Celdran, 2002, 185, 465). The most “consistent” contributions was that of **Romans** who dominated the Iberian space, imposing a sole language, where appeared several names of places arrived up to our days, in forms obviously amended but meant to evoke their Latin origin. Ex. *Astorga* (<Asturica Augusta) capital of Maragateria, *Salcedo* (<salicetum), in Galicia (on the route of *camino*), *Pineda* (<pinetum) – several localities, including one on Maresme Coast in Catalunya, *Zaragoza* (<Caesaraugusta, name give in honour of Julius Caesar, Arabian form *Saraqusta*).

3. The layer produced by Germanic migrations, *Visigoths* and *Sueves*, when, for the first time in the history appears the geopolitical concept of *Spain*³. In toponymy, there have been preserved names of places leaving from anthroponyms, most frequently in Galicia where *sueves* have established (another Germanic people): *Gomariz*, *Gondomar* (<Gundemar), *Rairiz*, *Allariz*, *Mondariz*, *Hermisende*, *Aldan*, *Sendium* etc. There have resisted up to present Latin-Germanic, *hybrid forms*, such as *Castrojeriz* (<Castrum Sigerici), *Vileza* (<villa de Agiza), *Villalan* (<villa Egilani) etc. The Germanic tracks in toponymy are more obvious in Galicia, Asturia and in lower proportions in the provinces of Leon and Zamora (Fanjul, 2005, 189).

4. The layer produced by the invasions of Moslems (started in 711) who named the space conquered *Al Andalus*⁴. The long presence of Moslems (most of them in North Africa, Hamites and not Semites/authentic Arabians) left tracks in Iberian Toponymy, more numerous in the south of the country. For instance, there are several names of places (especially hydronyms or oiconyms with the origin in hydronyms) which begin with *Guad* the equivalent of *wadi*-water: *Guadajoz* (“puddle river”, *wadi alshush*) (Albaiges, 1998, 291), *Guadalajara* (“river of stones”, *wadi aljar*), *Guadalcanal* (river with quay sector; *wadi al kanal*), *Guadalupe* (“river of wolf”, *wadi al-lub*), *Guadalquivir* (*wadi al-kibir*, “great

river”)(Albaiges, 1998, 294). Some Arabian hydronyms stood – by extension – on the base of other geographical categories of toponyms such as *Guadarrama* (in Arabian *wadi ar-Ramla*, “river with sand, sandy”), name worn today by a locality (thus an oiconym) with several mineral sources and mountain chain (namely a morphonym / oronym) near Madrid (*Sierra de Guadarrama*). Some Arabian denominations “migrated” with the Spanish colonists in the New World, being notorious in this respect the oiconym *Guadalajara* worn by one of urban agglomerations (4,2 million inhabitants, 2005) of Mexico.

Returning to Spain, let’s say that oiconyms are also numerous, having as origin the Arabian term *al qalat* (fortification/castle/borough) – sign of long conflicts (until 1492) between Christians and Moslems. Example: a) *Alcala de Henares* (<*al-Qala nahar*, “castle on the river”)(Celdran, 2002, 27) with a famous university and the native place of the most famous Spanish – Miguel de Cervantes. b) *Calatayud* (<*Qalat Ayuub* “castle of Ayub”) a significant locality between Zaragoza and Madrid. Another term appointing a consolidated, fortified place,

al-qasr (arrived in Spanish as *alcazar*) is the Arabian form of Latin *castrum*. On the track of pilgrims we encounter *Villalcazar de Sirga*, accommodation near Carrión de les Condes. Another Arabian term – passed practically unchanged (phonetically) in Spanish – is *al-qantara* (“bridge”), reproduced by the well-known oiconym *Alcantara* (prov. Caceres, Extremadura) name came from the bridge over Tajo built during the reign of emperor Traian⁵ (Albaiges, 1998, 48).

Several toponyms (not all) which begin with the morpheme *al-* suggest the Arabian origin of these, signalling geographical realities of most various. More known by geographers (economists) is the oiconym *Almaden* which signalises antic exploitations of cinnabar (mercury mineral) active as well currently from Ciudad Real province (Castilla la Mancha)⁶. Through Arabian, there have arrived to us antic names of places such as *Cesaraugusta* (see above) and *Leukant/Leucantum* today Alicante/Alacant (in Arabian *al-Lakant*) (Celdrán, 2002, 50).

The competition similar with a crusade between Moslems and Christian kings, starting with those of Asturia⁷ who considered

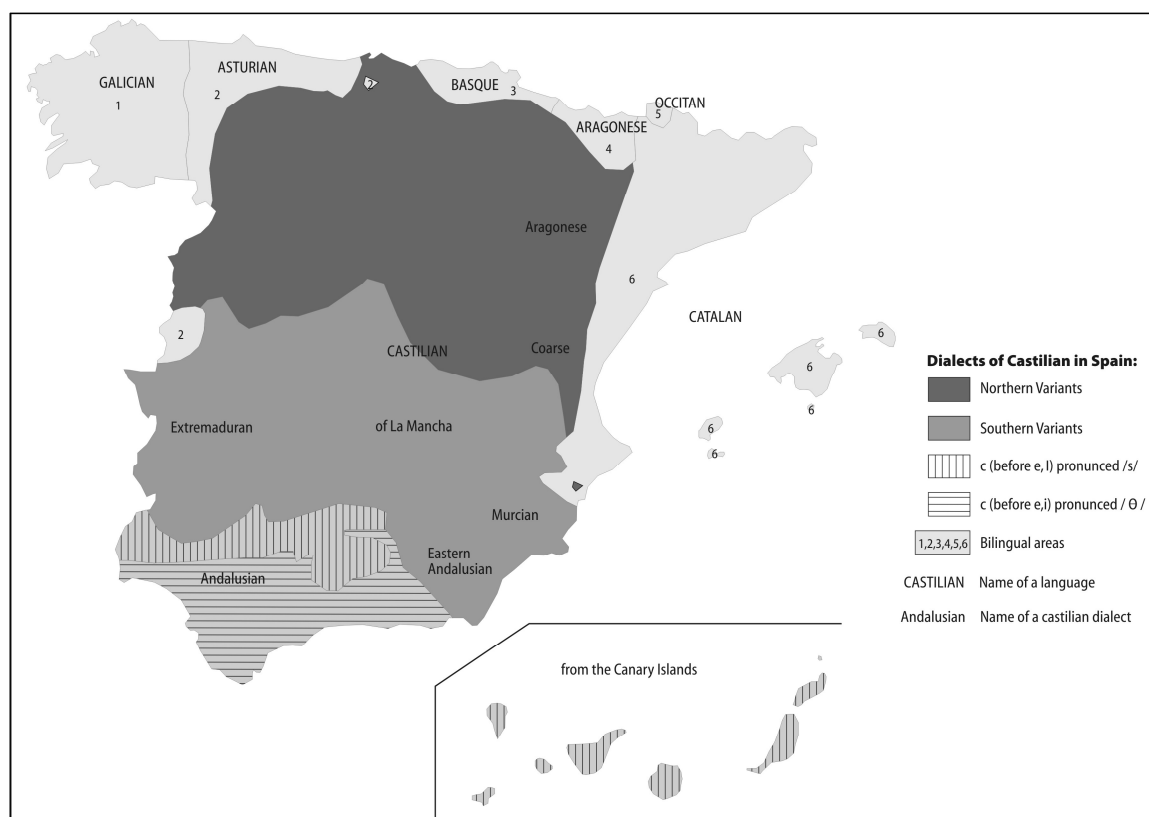


Figure 1. Dialects of Spanish/Castilian language

themselves the legitimate followers of Visigoths kings – known as *Reconquista* – also had a significant role in Iberian toponymic denomination. There are several names of places formed of hagionyms, from *San Adrian* (locality in Navarra), to *San Vicente (de Alcantara, ...de la Barquera, ...de la Sonsierra* etc.) (Celdrán, 2002, 692-721). But the most famous is *Santiago de Compostela*, place where are encountered the relics of Iacob apostle, under the flag of whom took place Reconquista. Obviously, there are not absent names formed with the word *santa* – “saint”, the examples being numerous as well, from *Santa Agueda* from the Country of Basques to *Santa Ursula* from Canary Isles. In the category of hagionyms are also included *Santa Cruz* (saint cross) and *Santa fe* (saint faith) which enter in the structure of some names of places from Spain and Latin America. More known examples: *Santa Cruz de Tenerife* (arch. Canarias/Canare), *Santafe de Bogota* (Colombia).

These names formed in the space of Castilian (Spanish) language are added those from the space of Catalan language (regional language) formed with the term *Sant* (*Sant Adria* – the equivalent of *San Adrian, San Andreu, San Antoni*. The name of Virgin Mary (in Spanish *Nuestra Virgen* to which is added several times a determinative depending on the places / situations where, by traditions was signalised the Mother of God) appears not only in oiconyms (names of localities) but also in odonyms; there have been reviewed 474 streets whose name remind of the day of Hispanity (12 October) which, in Catholic calendar, is also the day of the patron of Spain (*Nuestra Senora del Pilar*); of the 474 streets, 137 have the name of *Calle de la Hispanidad* and 337 the name of *Calle de Nuestra Senora del Pilar*)⁸.

One shall also mention the colonisation actions performed by Iberian kings (of Navarra, Leon, Castilia, Aragon etc.) after which, gradually, have conquered from Moslems the territories lost at the beginning of VIII century. It is interesting that in the localities from the route to Santiago de Compostela have also settled colonists from beyond Pyrenees, known under the medieval

name *francos*⁹. The infrapage text is enough expressive in original to be translated.

This brief presentation emphasizes the general lines of Spanish toponymy, an original toponymy, result of superposition of several layers of civilisation and culture. It reflects both the distinct characteristics of natural elements (there are no names of places given randomly, all are motivated) as well as the action of humanisation of landscape and elements of culture specific to the people which succeeded over millennia. It appears as distinct element in European toponymic assembly the amount of names of places formed in (or under the influence) Arabian language, more numerous in the south half and less numerous in the northern one among which Camino de Santiago. These are added the names of places resulting from hagionyms, numerous all along the pilgrimage track.

Let's also recall the fact that due to their priority in the colonisation of New World, the Spanish people brought beyond Atlantic Ocean¹⁰ essential elements of their civilisation and culture of which couldn't miss the names of places. There has been emphasized thus an American double of Hispanic toponymic cover in the assembly of Latin America (with “extensions” in south of USA)¹¹.

Camino de Santiago – expressive sample of Spanish toponymy

St. James' Way / *Camino de Santiago*, general name given today to the most frequent route of pilgrimage focused by Santiago de Compostela, named in Spain *camino frances*¹² it is one of the most interesting elements of European cultural geography¹³ (fig. 2).

Today, when desacralization of world reached a high level, it is appreciated rather as the oldest *tourist itinerary* described for the first time in the first tourist guide in the history (XII century)¹⁴. It was asserted by the great German man of culture J.W. Goethe that this road, crossed for hundreds of years by representatives of all European people, “is the one who created Europe”¹⁵. We may say, at the same time, - closer to the theme of this study



Figure 2. The main route of St James' Way (the French route)

– that it is also the *most famous* toponym of our continent.

Therefore, a trip (or several, such those of the author, 2006-2009) with the pilgrims came from all parts of the world is a unique experience which favours as well the knowledge of a cultural-historic space with a remarkable originality. A first direction was represented by some pertinent explanations for numerous localities (large and small, many of them very small) which range as beads on a thread along the *camino*. We resorted to specialised volumes (partly quoted in this paper) and to some information picked up from locals.

Another specific, particular direction of this experience was represented by the knowledge of toponymy (names of streets, markets inside localities) class of names of places which synthesize the entire experience of inhabitants, amended not few times by the intervention of authorities of superior rank

(even national one). Given the specificity of the trip (crossing a route of almost 800 km within a reasonable time), the toponymic/odonymic research was restricted to the space of small accommodations (villages, hamlets) and only tangential presented the nomenclature of most important urban accommodations.

The almost 200 localities on the main track named *Camino francés* represent a true sample of toponymic layer of Spain, bearing the signs of permanent presence of man and of his pressure on the environment. At the same time, their names represent a true mirror of the languages spoken in time in N Spain: the idiom *basc*, pre-Roman idioms (*Celtic*), Latin, Germanic languages and Arabian; they express as well the efforts of refreshment of co-official languages, Basque (*euskera*) in Navarra and Galician (*gallega*) in the NW of the country.

From the multitude of names of places noted on camino, we have selected some examples for different situations which contribute to the emphasis of toponymic layer¹⁶.

Let's start with those oiconyms which emphasize a *trait of natural environment* where appears and is developed the human accommodation. We deal with: a) *vegetal formations* – *Artieda* (oakery), *Lizarra* (ash) – both leaving from Basque words, *El Acebo* (bay, plant specific to Mediterranean areas, *Castaneda* (place with many chestnuts); b) *elements of relief / lithology* – *Tardajos* (knob, height), *Sangüesa/Zangoza* (<*zango*, in euskerra „coomb, abrupt versant”), *Carrion* (<“stony”, cf. indo-European radical *kar* = *stone*, *stony*) in the phrase *Carrión de los Condes*; c) *elements of fauna* – *Cirauqui* (<*ziraun*, “Asp” in euskerra), *Najera* (from Arabian word *al nasr-* „eagle nest”), *Atapuerca* (flock of boars), *El Burgo Ranero* (signaling the amount of frogs in the pond near the locality from leonese meseta, today, monument of nature); *Ventosa* (expressive oiconym from the higher riojan space, between Logroño and Najera), *Hornillos del Camino* (metaphoric expression of excessive heat – of oven – during summer days), *Hontanas* (from the amount of sources encountered here a long time ago); obligatory points of passing / including fords: *Somport* (<*portus summus*, the most important mountain passage in Pyrenees, during Romans times), *Portela* (<*porta*, entrance, gate, place of entrance in the mountain space from the borders with Galicia with the rest of Spain), *Portomarin* (<*Porto Marin*, important ford of passing over Mino river).

Other oiconyms remind of states of things from the far and very far past among which not less imposed the erection of fortifications, points of defence: *Castiello de Jaca*, *Berdun* (<*virodunum*)< *Rocaforte* (<*rocca* fortification on a rock), *Torres del Rio*, *Villa de Torre*, *Castrojeriz* (<*castrum* + *Sigeric*, Visigoth chief), *Villalcazar de Sirga*, *Castelo dos Infantes*, *Castromaior* etc. It also signalises elements of support of circulation of pilgrims and other travellers on this famous medieval road: old *points of support*, of *stopping* of pilgrims: *Maqnsilla de las Mulas*, *Hospital de*

Orbigo, *Hospital de Condesa*, *Hospital da Cruz*; then points of passing over waters/rivers: *Puente la Reina de Jaca*, *Zubiri* (in Basque/euskerra “village on the bridge”), *Puente la Reina*, *San Nicolas de Puente Fitero*, *Puente Villarente*, *Puente Castro*, *Ponferrada* (“bridge with steel reinforcements”, the most famous of all), *Ponte Nova* (after *Samos*).

Other oiconyms emphasize the road itself, the placement of localities along it, in order to distinguish them of other localities situated in other localisations. From this point of view, it appears a really interesting situation namely that the first locality having the determinative *del/do Camino* appears on the entrance in autonomous community (of today) Castilla y Leon, after the track has included localities from Argon, Navarra and La Rioja communities. Let's mention those bearing the said determinative: *Redecilla del Camino*, *Espinosa del Camino*, *Hornillos del Camino*, *Boadilla del Camino*, *San Nicolas del Real Camino*, *Trobajo del Camino*, *Virgen del Camino*, *San Miguel del Camino*, *San Martin del Camino*, *Rabanal del Camino*, *San Mamede do Camino*, *San Xiao do Camino*.

Specific to Spain and *camino* cannot represent an exception is the multitude of oiconyms expressing the religious feeling from the period of founding the respective popular points, in other words the use of hagionyms: *Santa Cilia de Jaca*, *Virgen de la Cuevas*, *Santo Domingo de la Calzada*, *San Juan de Ortega*, *San Bol*, *San Nicolas de Puente Fitero*, *Sahagun* (<*Sanct Facund/San Fagunt/Sahagun*), *San Nicolas de Real Camino*, *Virgen del Camino*, *Valverde de la Virgen*, *San Miguel del Camino*, *San Martin del Camino*, *San Justo de la Vega*, *Santa Catalina de Samoza*; in the Galician space, we encounter the oiconyms *San Cristoval do Real*, *San Martino do Real*, *San Mamede do Camino*, *San Xiao do Camino*, *Santa Maria de Melide*, *Santa Irene*, *San Anton*, *San Palo*, *San Marcos*, *San Lazaro*, **SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA**. Two personalities draw the attention at the earlier period of pilgrimage, sanctified subsequently, which played important roles in the determination of the current track of *camino*, *Santo Domingo de la Calzada* (1019-1109) declared patron of Spanish of roads, among others) and his apprentice *San Juan de Ortega* (1050-1143).

Other oiconyms signalise the anthropic pressure over environment, more exactly the removal of natural vegetation: *Roncesvalles* (<lat. *roncare*, clearance for furrow), *Burlada* – near Pamplona (<*buru* = hill in Basque/euskerra, *Ustulata* / burnt in Latin); agricultural activities: *Granon* (<*grannum*, abundant in cereals), *Fromista* (<*frumentum*, wheat), then the colonisations with population over the mountains (from present France): *Canfranc*, *Villafranca Montes de Oca* (near Burgos), *Villafranca del Bierzo* (in Leon province near Galicia) old owners: *Candanchu* (<field d’Anjou, signalling this transborder possession of well-known French nobiliary / royal family), *Teradillos de los Templarios* (signalling the presence of the famous military religious order) or old occupations: *Herrerias* (<*blacksmiths*) and peasant installations: *Molinaseca* (<*wind mills*) etc.¹⁷

Before passing to the real analysis of odonyms gathered from the context of the road to Santiago de Compostela, I state that the system of denomination is a typical European, without names of streets leaving from numbers (as it is the case of American denomination of towns) and fact specific to Spain, the denominations are expressed in Castilian but also bilingual in Navarra (in euskera/basque and in castilian/Spanish), or in the regional language gallega (in Galicia).

Similar to other countries, including Romania, the Spanish street nomenclature entered in normalisation phase (of the *marks* of streets and numbers of buildings on roads on the respective street) relatively late, more exactly at the beginning of XIX century. In case of Spanish towns of province it is accepted that the process has started during Napoleon occupation (1808-1814). However, in France, the street marking began in 1728 in Paris (Badariotti, 2002, 289), fact which allowed the determination of the names of streets *beyond the oral tradition* which proves to be a traditional one¹⁸. It was proved that the street denomination through markings was more than an element of support in the orientation of locals or of passengers; it *became an instrument of intervention in the collective memory of the inhabitants of the town* which was keeping previously for the means of internal communication only those

elements with functional character: *Strada Mare*, *Piata Sfaturui*, *Strada Spitalului*, *Strada Bisericii* etc.

Once instituted the street plates, they also become a tool by which the political power could mark the elements which support it, either names of representative personalities or mobilising notions (such as liberty, country, victory etc.)¹⁹. In addition, in terms of territorial expansion of towns and implicitly of increase of street network, one has resorted to denominations both from national space (cultural, scientific personalities, other toponyms) and the international one; it is both about anthroponyms (leaving from cultural, scientific, artistic personalities) and other toponymic geographical categories (oiconyms, oronyms, hydronyms etc.) or strange names (see further on fig. with names of streets from Zaragoza). The latter issues are mainly encountered in middle and great human accommodations, the smaller or rural ones needing a more reduced stock of denominations, dominant being those related to local space and history. It was also obvious the intervention of political factor, thing which emphasizes a side mainly ignored of odonymy, namely that of *formers of collective mentalities* (Light et al, 2003). This thing became obvious since the beginning of the process of institution of street plates as written references necessary for orientation in the lived space.

A real case of “official odonymic endowment” from camino area is offered by Palencia, the capital of omonym province from Castilla y Leon community (Macho, 2009) (Macho, 2009). Here, during 1809, there have been denominated / marked the streets (June 1809) and the numbers of buildings (October 1809), action presented as reference of modernisation of Spain (“returned”) by Frenchmen. This modernisation included as well the transfer to municipal councils, of the monopole of street denomination, previously a prerogative of royal power. In case of Palencia, the action had an immediate practical signification, more exactly to facilitate orientation / movement of the representatives (militaries) of French army of occupation “lodged” in a town where practically noone was speaking French²⁰.



Photo 1. Madrid – Street denomination from a victory of Christian fleet - led by Juan de Austria (half brother of King Phillip II of Spain) – over the Turkish one near Lepanto, in 1571 (photo I. Nicolae).

Most of the streets' names were leaving from certain local references used by locals, and the first street "marked" by plates was naturally *Calle Mayor* (main street). The indicating plates have acquired gradually (not everywhere) an esthetic, figurative charge, reminding of respective name (Photo 1).

To be reminded that, once entered in the use of inhabitants, the street nomenclature has suffered modifications according to political orientations denominated / came to power in Madrid. These modifications were obviously partial and concerned those names of personalities which no longer "corresponded" to the new political regime. In case of Palencia (which may be extrapolated at the level of the entire urban assembly of the country), the first modifications occurred during the years of that *Sexenio revolucionario* (period consecutive to the reign of queen Isabel II).

For instance, in Palencia, the odonym *Paseo del Salon de Isabel II* was replaced by a "proper" one namely *Paseo de la Libertad*. The restoration has removed the modifications and proposed other names, of traditional conservators. Other changes have occurred during the 2nd republic (1931-1936) subsequently during the franchist regime and eventually during post-franchist period, of restoration of monarchy and democracy. Upon returning to a democratic regime, one has passed gradually (not immediately) to the

removal of names related to franchist period. They have acquired deep significations after the approval by Parliament and publication in the Official Journal of Law no. 52/2007 named the Law for Historic Memory (*Ley de la Memoria Historica*)²¹ which identifies as well the means of intervention over franchist "inheritance", one of these being as well the street nomenclature²².

At the level of a locality, the odonyms are constituted in the geographical category of names of places *the most often used*. This happens because they are used daily in orientation and positioning within the lived space (town, borough, village). Obviously, some names are used more than others and this is reflected within the respective name as it is the case of the main place of meeting / gathering of locals – "*Plaza Mayor*" – and of the main street "*Calle Mayor*" (which not few times bears the name of *Calle Real*). We tried to find out to what extent the track to Santiago is noted in the street nomenclature of the localities crossed, the real situations being enough different. If in Atapuerca (locality with special resonance at European level)²³, the main street is called *Calle Camino de Santiago* in Riego de Ambrós (near Ponferrada) this name is assigned to a short street, situated at the west side of the state, name meant to orientate the travellers/pilgrims!

An explanation of the reduced number of odonyms related to the route of pilgrims is also the fact that in most cases the route – within the locality – superposes with the main street called *Calle Mayor/Calle Real*. If we consider the fact that most localities appeared or occurred due to the road to Santiago, we may appreciate that the name of *Calle Mayor/Calle Real* is eventually a "modified" version for *Camino Santiago*. This fact is confirmed as well by the fact that in large towns such as Logrono and Ponferrada the name of *Camino de Santiago* was assigned to some new residential complexes situated at the edge of outside built-up area *all along the classical track* of pilgrims. In Logrono there is also a *Calle de Santiago*, street perpendicular on urban track of pilgrims, in the point of junction of the two streets being located the church dedicated to apostle. On *Calle de*

Santiago, there are also two commemorative plates (since 1955 and respectively 1983) dedicated to Delhuyar brothers, the discoverers of Wolfram, especially valuable metal, plates which complete the information offered by the street nomenclature and necessary to collective memory (Photo 2 ab).



Photo 2 a. Rabanal del Camino: Street marking (photo I. Nicolae). It is noticed how the main street *Calle Real* superposes to the urban section of *Camino de Santiago*.

A significant side of denomination in Iberian (Spanish) space is represented by the high degree of autonomy concerning the organisation of individual space of life. From the point of view of toponymy, this fact is marked, among others, by the conservation of some names (related to the local collective patrimony) among which it is noticed *fuero*-under the form *Plaza/Calle de los Fueros*, odonym which notes an ostentation, we may say, the element of autonomy assigned once to respective community (by central power) maintained with pride by the locals of old boroughs, today small towns or even rural communes (Photo 3)²⁴.

Autonomy presents sometimes even forms of resistance opposite to the decisions

of central power as it proves the refusal of local management from *Revenga de Campos* (locality from Tierra de Campos, a region mainly agricultural from N Castilla) to remove the street nomenclature of the name *Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera*, leader of falangist movement from inter-war period, assassinated during republican government which preceded the civil war. A discussion with locals on August 10th 2009 (within almost two years after the approval by Spanish Parliament of the “Law for historic memory”) showed me that they do not wish to change the respective denomination.



Photo 2 b. Atapuerca – Street marking the former / medieval autonomy (photo I. Nicolae)

In other words, the odonymy of north-Spanish space crossed by foot for weeks is an exciting one contributing to the completion of (personal) knowledge of Hispanic world of today and yesterday. Some comparisons with situations encountered / known on our lands are necessary, these representing a geographical gain of my walking experience.

There were considered the two major significations of odonymy namely:

a) The geographical one, in species that of useful reference in daily life of the inhabitants of community and not only (more exactly, as well of passengers such as the pilgrims to Santiago);

b) That of reference as (collective) memory. The latter issue, obvious mainly within urban localities, with appreciable number of inhabitants and implicitly of streets, has acquired consistency and

importance beginning with XIX century, based on modernisation of European societies, of urbanisation. The rural and urban localities of inferior rank (former feudal boroughs) were reached later and within a measure limited by this phenomenon. The forms taken by these names (others than those which refer to spaces and events with local resonance) are very different: it is about values (equality, equity, solidarity), institutions (the most often the town hall, the church, and in more important localities, university, theatre etc.) or personalities which may offer examples (Badariotti, 2002, 286).

The nomenclature of localities crossed show clearly (especially in case of hamlets, small villages) how, at the beginning, toponymy referred to the function of a place (of cult, market, gathering ...) which offered it a real and high informative content. This fact is completed by another value of the names of streets namely by the facilitation of street reference of respective places and therefore of orientation in territory with a view to optimise its use, its management, the trips which are necessary etc. Thus, the most important square – *Plaza Mayor* was (and sometimes still is) in its central part having as visible complementary element the church which bears the name / saint of the locality patron. This space, geographical reference must be regarded from two angles: first and always that of obvious orientation in the lived space and then to determine *a posteriori* different phases of space development of locality. For instance, when we see that *Plaza Mayor* no longer has a central position but a relatively peripheral one, we may conclude that the territorial development of accommodation was directed (the reasons must be searched for) towards the part far from it²⁵.

The recent evolutions on the line of application of law for the historic memory shows that things are not simple at all, the wounds from the past (franchist) are difficult to cure. If the name of Franco has disappeared relatively fast from street nomenclature (returning to the names worn previously), other names of personalities related to franchist regime have survived up to recent

period. The disposals of law for historic memory (since December 2007) are applied depending on local context, existing as well adverse reactions (to see *Revenga de Campos* case).

We shall present further on two real situations of application of this law in Navarra space, more exactly in that of Pamplona, town famous for its feasts of San Fermin marked by those competitions of Taurus on the streets of historical centre²⁶ competitions which also have human protagonists, dressed in specific suits (in white, red colours) and which, some of them remain with unpleasant memories (while others remain only with memories).

The first situation is that of *Chantrea / Txantrea* quarter (N of the town), quarter built for more than half a century where most initial denominations resulted from anthroponyms with franchist resonance²⁷. The criterion used to replace these names became “improper” was that of regional representation, the new names being selected among the oiconyms of Pamplona hollow (*Cuenca*). The suggestion to use in denomination the names of those assassinated by ETA did not acquire enough votes in the local council of Pamplona. The decision of change came from TAN (Tribunal Administrativo de Navarra). 20 streets have received in November 2008 new names, actions which needed 7000 Euro (for the 80 plates, 75 euro/piece) (Table 1).

The second local situation of small ampleness but with a more special signification is that of the square *Conde de Rodezno*, one of the important markets of Pamplona. This name assigned during franchist period after that of minister Tomas Dominguez de Arevalo (1882-1952, the last count / *conde de Rodezno*) was maintained being withdrawn only the reference to the respective minister and being reefered to this noble title created in 1790. The maintenance was possible given the fact that PNV (the party with most mandates in local council) considered enough the respective “ministerial” removal in order to fulfill the requirements of “Law of Historic Memory”²⁸.

Table 1. Streets from Chantrea with changed names (in italics the old names)

- *Calle Coronel Alfonso Beorlegui* Cuenca de Pamplona;
- *Calle Andrés Gorricho*Cendea²⁹ de Iza;
- *Travesía de Andrés Gorricho* Travesía Cendea de Iza;
- *Calle José Jimeno* Calle Cendea de Olza,
- *Travesía de José Jimeno* Travesía Cendea de Olza;
- *Calle Agustín Flamarique* Calle Cendea de Cizur,
- *Calle Jesús Vásquez* Calle Cendea de Galar;
- *Calle Mario Rueda* Calle Huarte,
- *Calle Crescencio Lacumberri* Calle Arteta,
- *Calle Francisco Urías* Calle Benáin,
- *Calle Jesús Blasco* Calle Cordovilla,
- *Calle Ramon Esquíroz* Calle Ibero;
- *Calle Francisco Goñi* Calle Noáin;
- *Calle Jesus María Aznares* Calle Tiebas;
- *Calle José Huércano* Calle Zuasti;
- *Calle Julio Casi* Calle Paternáin,
- *Calle Lucio Arrieta* Calle Imarcoáin,
- *Calle Federico Mayo* Calle Berrioplano,
- *Calle Marcos Goñi* Calle Berriosuso*,
- *Calle Fermín Isturiz* Calle Berriozar.

*to see Photo 3.

Current stock (analysed) of toponyms along the camino:

- Includes – with priority – elements of local economic and cultural environment (gardens of vegetable, areas to be threshed, a fountain / a source from where drink water

the grazed animals, a mill, a bridge etc.)

- *Signalises* the position within the locality of the most important objectives for respective community (church, market, school, a fortification, a monastery etc.)

- *Uses* frequently in most rare accommodations (not only with one-three streets), hagionyms often some with local resonance. *This is one of specific characteristics of St. James' Way.*

- *Uses* names of personalities and events which marked the local, regional or national history (ex. *Calle Conde Camarasa* in Castrojeriz, important personality of the place a few centuries ago as well as *Calle Ramon y Cajal*, scientific personality of European rank in Villarmentero de Campos, a hamlet with less than 20 inhabitants).

- *Emphasizes* the pressure of political factor (from the last one hundred years, approximately) which is more and more conscious of the value of toponyms as participants to the creation of *collective mentalities* (beyond the strictly local social space). This issue becomes clear if we compare the current nomenclature with the one existent in the franchist period.

Given the multitude of settlements crossed on Camino we shall develop during this stage only the toponymy of two of them, namely **Atapuerca** and **Castrojeriz**, remaining the other observations (to be continued as well in the summer of 2010) to be presented in a future study.



Photo 3. New street marking (since November 2008) in Chantrea/Txantrea (Pamplona)

Atapuerca Case³⁰

The collection of these names proved to be a real pleasure, not only scientific, but also esthetical, due to special, suggestive forms of street plates, performed of ceramic and having a pictogram revealing for such names (see picture and some explanations further on).

The stock of odonyms is the following: *Calle Camino de Santiago* (main street of locality); *Calle Pablo Garcia Virumbrales*; *Calle Fuero de Atapuerca*; *Calle Fuente Cubillo*; *Calle El Mirador* (after the name of the cave where have been discovered the tracks of *Homo antecessor*); *Calle Turrumbero*; *Plaza del Consejo*; *Calle La Revilla* (after the name of the oldest quarter / *barrio* of the locality); *Calle del Aire* (Photo 4); *Calle Fuenteron*; *Calle Hospital de Peregrinos*; *Calle Pradolagunas* (the indicating plate presents as symbol two puddles with some vegetation around); *Calle Las Vinas*; *Plaza Fundacion Atapuerca*; *Calle El Chorreton* (symbol of a spring); *Calle San Vicente*; *Calle Valhondo* (as symbol, a deep valley); *Calle San Polo*; *Calle Papasol*; *Calle La Charola*; *Calle San Cristobal*; *Calle San Martin*; *Calle Batalla de Atapuerca*; *Calle Marigarcia*; *Plaza Antecessor*; *Calle Cueva Mayor*; *Calle El Molino* (leads towards a mill which was once in the field, over the hill); *Calle Barriguelo* (symbolises a fountain); *Calle Portalon*; *Calle Fin de Rey* (it is about king Garcia of Navarra who died in the battle of 1054, reproduce annually with a certain pomp).

Analysed, these odonyms confirm us that here, on Spanish lands, toponymy is a true archive of history – older or newer – of such place. In the respective locality – famous currently through the discovery of fossils of the oldest hominid of Europe (*Homo antecessor*, of almost one mil. years), the streets remind of:

a) famous battles of almost a millennium since 1054, battle which changed the life of Spain. King Fernando I of Castilla won and not his brother king Garcia of Navarra (*C/Batalla de Atapuerca*); a former church (case of the street *C/San Polo* – information from a local woman) and of an old monastery (*C/San Vicente*) existent once in the neighbouring mountain region (Sierra de Atapuerca).



Photo 4. Atapuerca: Suggestive street marking (photo by I. Nicolae)

b) of concrete realities of local space: *C/San Martin* is a street which goes/leads to the church with the same name (that from the hill). *C/Fuenteron* leads to a water source near the village used currently by the sheep of locals taken to graze, *C/Fuente Cubillo* leads to a source from the lower side of the village. A special denomination reflecting the nature of the area is *C/del Aire* which reminds of the fact that on respective street is concentrated the wind which blows from the mountain. Last but not least, *C/Camino de Santiago* appoints the street on which travel for centuries the pilgrims.

c) of famous local persons. It is about *Pabli Garcia Virumbrales* who emigrated in Mexico, gave the necessary amount to build a modern school (75 years ago) and whose name is worn by a square and a street from the centre of the locality. We may also include herein, figuratively speaking, that ascendant of ours named *Homo Antecessor*, whose name is worn by a market from V locality. This name is “reinforced” by a monument, representing this prime hominid as hunter (it as discovered that it was also practicing cannibalism). For a higher precision and establishment of this discovery unique in Europe, two streets remind of the places where have been discovered the fossils of hominid: *C/Cueva Mayor* and *C/El Mirador*.

For a plus of local color transmitted to the ones in transit (pilgrims or not) let us remind that one restaurant is entitled *Comosapiens*, the paronym of *Homo sapiens*³¹.

Castrojeriz Case³²

A second example is offered by a city in Burgales Meseta with an interesting past, *Castrojeriz* being *the first* establishment in Castilla which in 974 was given certain privileges, that *Fuero*, through which it was created in time *caballeria villana* (a country gentry). It was the basis of a more and more powerful army that made Castilla the center of the Spanish state. An obelisk erected in 1974 in the park in the middle of the town reminds of this very special historic fact.

The name of the town is related to the fortification on the peak dominating today's fair (*Castrum Sigerici*), fortification transformed in ruins by the Iberic earthquake in 1755 that destroyed the capital of Portugal as well. The city has three longitudinal streets (someway along the level curve) that are *C/Real* (with two components: *Calle Real Oriente*, *Calle Real Ponente* (reported to *Plaza Mayor*), *C/del Cordon* and *C/Camarasa* (from the name of the count of Camarasa). Between them there are the so-called *travesias* (small streets).

From *Plaza Mayor*, *C/Peregrinos* detaches, which is *not included* in the pilgrims' route as they cross the city on *C/Real Ponente*. This toponym *C/Peregrinos* not related to the route of the pilgrims consigns the social-cultural reality of the *camino* with an important role in the life of the inhabitants.

In the toponyms stock, there are also: *C/Arcos Sardina*; *Travesia de Camarasa*, *Travesia Generosa*, *C/San Jurjo*, *Avenida de la Colegiata*, *C/del Castillo*, *C/Landelino Tardajos*³³ *C/Pescadeiros*, *Paseo de la Puerta del Monte* (the promenade area along what's left of the walls once surrounding the city and which took the name from *the access gate of the city*, still functional).

The elements forming the collective memory exceed here also (as in Atapuerca) the proper street naming considering a statue of the pilgrim accompanied by the text:

*"Homenaje a los que desde 1000 anos dan forma y espiritu al camino; Castrojeriz, 15 septiembre 2001"*³⁴; then, the memorial stone on the wall of a house bordering **Paseo** to the west (laid in 1992) signaling another local pride element that is *Alvarez Perez Osorio* was born here, "traveling companion of Cristobal Colón and Pedro de Mendoza" (the last – "poblador de la Rio de la Plata").

Conclusions

The toponymy seen on Camino de Santiago reflects the age of populating, its specific, the specific of the natural and social environment.

- The way of pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela is marked not only by yellow arrow and Saint James shell but also by specific toponyms as *Calle Camino de Santiago*, *Calle del Peregrino* etc.

- The religious specific is outlined by the presence of and of numerous hagionyms specific objectives (churches, roadside crosses, monuments etc.).

- The intervention of the officials is felt by promotion of names of personalities with national resonance (political men, of culture, of science). At the same time, in the context of town-planning development, the new toponyms are destined, in certain cases to fortify the national/regional feeling. We have the example of the *Estella's* outskirt area called *Irache/Iratxe* (after the name of the famous monastery around) where we meet as street names toponyms and choronyms from the Basque language space (euskerra), co-official in Navarra (fig. 3)

- toponymical extravagances do not find their place in that space. We can bring to comparison the street names of a new district (urbanización) from Zaragoza, the capital of Aragon, a city situated outside the route of pilgrims.



Figure 3. Urbanizacion Iratxe/Irache. (apud Google maps)

NOTES

¹ For instance the hydronym Ebro/Ebru has its origin in the Celtic term *iber* (“running water”). The name passed to the NE region of today Spain afterwards to the entire peninsula beyond Pyrenees.

² In Navarra, euskera is the official language, fact obvious among other in street marking.

³ In *Etimologiae*, Isidor de Sevilla (560-636) shows that the origin of the word is Carthaginian, *Ispani* appointing the town of Sevilla of these days which the Romans have named *Hispalis*. Then, in *Historia regibus Gothorum, vandalorum et suevorum*, he extends the name *Hispania* to Iberian geographical space.

⁴ Expression on which relies the chronim *Andalucia/Andaluzia*, appointing the autonomous community from the south of the country.

⁵ In Alcantara, it was incorporated in 1156 a well-known religious military order, active participant to Reconquista.

⁶ The Arabian term is *al ma'din* (Celdrán, 2002, 53).

⁷ The only part of Iberian peninsula which was not effectively dominated by Moslems.

⁸ Most of the streets with this name are in Andalucia (66), Catalunya (63) and Aragon (54).

⁹ “En todos estos lugares (n.i. more important localities on camino) se establecio una poblacion relativamente importante de francos (s.n.i.) que trabajan como campesinos en alguncasos y en otros como artesanos y mercaderes que gozan de una

situacion de privilegio con relacion a los campesinos...” (J.L. Martin et al, 1998, 179)

¹⁰ Named in popular language *charco* (pool)!

¹¹ See the regionims *California, Nevada, Colorado* then the oiconyms *Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose* to name the most important.

¹² “En todos estos lugares (n.i. more important localities on camino) se establecio una poblacion relativamente importante de francos (s.n.i.) que trabajan como campesinos en alguncasos y en otros como artesanos y mercaderes que gozan de una situacion de privilegio con relacion a los campesinos...” (J.L. Martin et al, 1998, 179)

¹³ **Motto:** *Durante los siglos centrales de la Edad Medieval, El Camino Santiago habia cumplido el papel de verdadero cordon umbilical entre Europa y una Espana progresivamente emancipada de la influencia islamica haciendola gravitar decididamente hacia Occidente.* (J. I. Ruiz de la Pena, Universidad de Oviedo)

¹⁴ It is about the 5th part of the paper *Codex Calixtinus* drawn up by the French monk Aymeric Picaud after the second pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (1140).

¹⁵ “Europe was born on the pilgrim road to Santiago” (cf. Frey, N. L. 1993)

¹⁶ Etymologic explanations were taken over from J.M. Albaigès (1998) and P. Celdrán (2002)

¹⁷ Detailed analysis of oiconyms along the camino shall form the object of another study, in course of preparation.

¹⁸ We have examples as well from Romanian Bucharest space, of the avenue which connects the University and Mihail Kogalniceanu Square which the older person still call *6 Martie*, denomination previous to the year 1965. After 1965, it was named *Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej* (until 1989) and after 1990 returned to the old name *Regina Elisabeta* (traditional name, previous to communist regime).

¹⁹ Issues induced by the spirit of French revolution and importer subsequently in the entire Europe in the XIX century, the century of formation of national states.

²⁰ As technical detail, it is reminded the fact that the plates were placed on the first and respectively the last building from the left side of the street.

²¹ The name is longer “*Ley por la que se reconocen y amplian derechos y se establecen medidas a favor de quienes padecieron persecucion o violencia durante la Guerra Civil y la dictadura*” being however known and debated widely under this short denomination. In Navarra, to this modification has also contributed the so-called *Ley Foral de Simbolos* of 2002 with competence area only in this community (Navarra / official Reino de Navarra).

²² In art. 15, it is stipulated that “la ley establece que los escudos, insignias, placas y otros objetos o menciones conmemorativas de exaltacion personal o colectivo del levantamiento military, de la Guerra Civil y de la repression de la dictadura deberaan ser retiradas de los edificios y espacios publicos”.

²³ Near it, in Sierra de Atapuerca, there have been discovered in 1994 the fossils of the oldest hominid from Europe, *Homo antecessor* (over 1,2 mil. years).

²⁴ Another example in this respect is the *main square* from Estella, locality in Navarra where was founded (XII-XIII century) a royal residence, transformed these days in art museum.

²⁵ It is emphasized *Navarette* (La Rioja) whose *Plaza Mayor* is situated in V localities.

²⁶ Among these, *Calle de Estafeta*.

²⁷ The decision of Municipal Council of Pamplona of 24.06.1954 stipulated that it is assigned to the streets from the new quarter Chantrea “los nombres de los primeros muertos en la Cruzada (n.i. against the Communism), naturales y vecinos de Pamplona (cf. *Diario de Noticias*, Pamplona, 24.02.2008).

²⁸ Cf. *Diario de Noticias*, Navarra, 26.07.2009

²⁹ *ceñdea* – Basque/euskera word for „municipality”.

³⁰ The registration was performed on August 3rd 2008 and August 6th 2009

³¹ *Comer* – “to eat” (in Spanish).

³² Information collected on August 4th 2008 and August 8th 2009.

³³ Name given in the honor of an emigrant inhabitant in Mexico who donated an amount of money to the community (information received from don Luis Tardajos, nephew of the one who named the street).

³⁴ The inhabitants are reminded that their current life is very much related to the vivacity of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, after in the 14th-16th century *Castrojeriz* was a powerful rival of *Burgos*, with intense commercial connections with Bruges (Flandre) where the local gentry held sumptuous residences.

³⁴This aspect and others will be developed in another material in work in this moment.

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