Biblical Anthroponyms in Secular Contexts

Antropônimos bíblicos em contextos seculares

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Abstract: The dossier on biblical anthroponyms in secular contexts explores how biblical names transcend their religious origins to become integral in various cultural and linguistic landscapes. Through onomastics, socio-pragmatics, and cultural studies, the reviewed articles highlight the enduring relevance and adaptability of biblical names. These studies show that these names are integrated into everyday language and cultural practices, reflecting broader sociopolitical and cultural shifts. In Cuba, names like José, Juan, Pedro, and Rafael highlight their significance in shaping cultural identities amidst historical changes. Similarly, in Algeria and Israel, the phonetic adaptations and symbolic meanings of biblical names illustrate the interplay between historical, cultural, and religious influences. Studies on Mexico and Ukraine further emphasize the role of these names as markers of cultural continuity and identity, transcending their original religious connotations. However, several limitations were identified across the reviewed articles. Many studies focus on specific regions, limiting the generalizability of their findings. The narrow scope of some studies based on specific periods may not capture long-term trends. An over-reliance on specific theoretical frameworks and secondary data sources may introduce biases, limiting the consideration of other perspectives. To address these gaps, future research should expand geographic and temporal scopes for a more comprehensive understanding of naming practices. Diversifying theoretical frameworks and incorporating comparative studies with other cultural contexts will offer broader insights. Detailed phonetic and pragmatic analyses, along with visual aids, will enhance the accessibility and richness of findings. Discussing the broader implications of these findings for other languages and cultural contexts will enhance the relevance and impact of the research. This comprehensive approach will enrich onomastics and contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamic interplay between religious heritage and secular adaptation of biblical names.

Keywords: *biblical anthroponymy, proper names, onomastics, religious text, secular context*

Resumo: O dossiê sobre antropônimos bíblicos em contextos seculares explora como os nomes bíblicos transcendem suas origens religiosas para se tornarem parte integrante de várias paisagens culturais e linguísticas. Por meio de estudos onomásticos, sociopragmáticos e culturais, os artigos revisados neste artigo destacam a relevância duradoura e a adaptabilidade dos nomes bíblicos. Esses estudos mostram que esses nomes estão integrados às práticas linguísticas e culturais cotidianas, refletindo mudanças sociopolíticas e culturais mais amplas. Em Cuba, nomes como José, Juan, Pedro e Rafael destacam sua importância na formação de identidades culturais em meio a mudanças históricas. Da mesma forma, na Argélia e em Israel, as adaptações fonéticas e os significados simbólicos dos nomes bíblicos ilustram a interação entre influências históricas, culturais e religiosas. Os estudos sobre México e Ucrânia enfatizam ainda mais o papel desses nomes como papel desses nomes como marcadores de continuidade cultural e identidade, transcendendo suas conotações religiosas originais. No entanto, várias

limitações foram identificadas nos artigos avaliados neste artigo. Muitos estudos enfocam regiões específicas, limitando a generalização de seus resultados. O escopo restrito de alguns estudos baseados em períodos específicos pode não capturar tendências de longo prazo. Uma dependência excessiva de referenciais teóricos específicos e fontes de dados secundários pode introduzir vieses, limitando a consideração de outras perspectivas. Para abordar essas lacunas, pesquisas futuras devem expandir escopos geográficos e temporais para uma compreensão mais abrangente das práticas de nomeação. A diversificação dos referenciais teóricos e a incorporação de estudos comparativos com outros contextos culturais oferecerão insights mais amplos. Análises fonéticas e pragmáticas detalhadas, juntamente com recursos visuais, aumentarão a acessibilidade e a riqueza dos resultados. Discutir as implicações mais amplas dos resultados obtidos nos artigos avaliados para outras línguas e contextos culturais aumentará a relevância e o impacto da pesquisa. Esta abordagem abrangente enriquecerá a Onomástica e contribuirá para uma compreensão mais profunda da interação dinâmica entre a herança religiosa e a adaptação secular dos nomes bíblicos.

Palavras-chave: antroponímia bíblica, nomes próprios, onomástica, texto religioso, context secular.

Introduction

Biblical names, the names of individuals found in Scripture, hold a significant place in religious and cultural histories. These names are often deeply intertwined with religious narratives, moral lessons, and spiritual symbolism. However, the influence of biblical names extends beyond theological boundaries, permeating various non-religious realms. The Journal *Onomástica desde América Latina* invited scholars from diverse fields to contribute original research exploring the multifaceted presence and implications of biblical names in non-religious contexts. This special journal issue examined the intersection of biblical names and non-religious environments, delving into their role, significance, and impact across a wide range of disciplines. While these names originate in religious traditions, they frequently find resonance in literature, art, history, psychology, sociology, linguistics, and more. This issue aims to foster an interdisciplinary dialogue that uncovers the dynamic ways in which biblical names have shaped non-religious narratives, language, and thought.

Biblical Anthroponyms in Cuba

Biblical names, or names derived from biblical texts, have played a significant role in various cultural and linguistic contexts. Two articles of the given issue aim to analyse how these names have transitioned from their religious origins to become integral parts of non-religious naming systems, focusing on the insights provided by two detailed studies on 19th-century Cuban anthroponymy. The study of biblical names in non-religious contexts reveals a complex and dynamic interplay between religious heritage and contemporary cultural practices. Both Zaldivar Aguilera and Campo Yumar's studies provide valuable insights into how these names have been adapted and integrated into the Cuban denominative system, reflecting broader sociopolitical and cultural shifts. By examining the persistence, adaptation, and sociolinguistic implications of biblical names, we gain a deeper understanding of their enduring significance and their role in shaping cultural identities.

The presence of biblical names in Cuba during the 19th century is closely tied to the historical, political, and social conditions of the time. Betsabeth Mariam Zaldivar Aguilera highlights that the Catholic Church played a crucial role in the official act of naming through baptismal certificates, due to the absence of a state body to fulfil this role for most of the century.

Luis Ramón Campo Yumar expands on this by noting that denominations associated with religion, specifically those linked to the Bible, have been the least studied within the panorama of Cuban studies on first names. Campo Yumar emphasizes the need to focus more on the vitality and permanence of biblical names, as previous studies have primarily concentrated on the use of Catholic saints' names. This historical reliance on religious institutions for naming practices underscores the importance of understanding the sociopolitical context in which these names were used.

Adaptation and Evolution of Biblical Names

The adaptation and evolution of biblical names in non-religious contexts are evident in both studies. Zaldivar Aguilera describes the process of normalization and orthographic variation in the use of biblical names in 19th-century Cuba. However, it focuses exclusively on the 19th-century Cuban context, specifically using data from the Ejército Libertador. This narrow scope limits the generalizability of the findings to other time periods. The study identifies 57 simple names of biblical origin from a corpus of 5287 individuals, showing a high concentration of use for names such as José, Juan, Pedro, and Rafael. These names were often adapted to fit the orthographic and phonological norms of the time, reflecting their integration into the Cuban linguistic landscape. While the researcher acknowledges orthographic variations, the article does not delve deeply into the possible reasons behind these variations beyond editorial inconsistencies. This limits the understanding of why certain names had multiple spellings.

Campo Yumar introduces the concept of "*biblicalidad*", which refers to the characteristics of names that evidence their formal or motivational relation with the Bible. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how biblical names are selected and adapted based on their religious and cultural significance. By analysing names from both a formal and motivational perspective, Campo Yumar provides a comprehensive view of the factors influencing the use and evolution of biblical names in Cuba. The study heavily relies on secondary data sources, such as previous research and existing databases, which may have inherent biases or limitations. Primary data collection, while included, seems limited in scope.

The sociolinguistic implications of biblical names are profound, serving as markers of identity and cultural continuity. In the context of 19th-century Cuba, the use of biblical names among slaves and freed individuals reflects the complex interplay between religion, identity, and colonial history. Zaldivar Aguilera explains how slaves were often given Christian names

during baptism, symbolizing their forced integration into Christian society and erasing their original identities. Her work highlights the role of names in negotiating power and cultural identity within colonial contexts.

Campo Yumar further explores the impact of biblical names on Cuban identity by examining the decline in the use of Catholic saints' names following the Cuban Revolution. Therefore, there is a logical imbalance in the representation of male and female names, with a greater focus on male names. This shift reflects broader sociopolitical changes and the evolving cultural landscape of Cuba. The study shows that the use of biblical names has persisted despite these changes, indicating their deep-rooted significance in Cuban society.

The cultural significance of biblical names is another crucial aspect explored in these studies. Zaldivar Aguilera discusses how biblical names were used in official military documents, such as the "*Índice Alfabético y Defunciones del Ejército Libertador de Cuba*". These names not only served as identifiers but also carried symbolic meanings that resonated with the cultural and religious values of the time. The high frequency of certain biblical names in these documents underscores their importance in the cultural narrative of Cuba's fight for independence. It is worth pointing out that the reliance on a single military document may introduce biases, as it only represents a specific subset of the population (mambises). This might not fully capture the broader population's naming practices.

Campo Yumar highlights the need for further research on the impact of Jewish migration on the Cuban anthroponymic system. During the first half of the 20th century, many Jews migrated to Cuba, bringing with them a rich tradition of biblical names. This influx likely influenced the diversity and usage of biblical names in Cuba, adding another layer of complexity to the study of these names in a non-religious context.

Biblical Anthroponyms in Muslim and Jewish Worlds

Biblical names, deeply rooted in religious traditions, often transcend their spiritual origins, embedding themselves into the lexicon of various cultures. This phenomenon is vividly illustrated in the articles "*Les Noms Bibliques en Algérie*" by Yamina Taibi-Maghraoui and "*Looking into Israeli Prevalent Girls' Names: Revealing Ideologies According to Foucauldian Discourse Analysis*" by Shlomit Landman, where the persistence and adaptation of these names are examined through the lenses of sociolinguistics and cultural anthropology.

The Algerian Context

In "*Les Noms Bibliques en Algérie*," Yamina Taibi-Maghraoui explores the enduring presence of biblical names in Algerian onomastics, emphasizing their phonetic modifications and cultural integrations. The study reveals that names such as "Abraham," "Moses," "David," and "Jesus" have undergone significant phonetic changes due to the linguistic diversity inherent in Algerian Arabic dialects. These names, imbued with millennia-old histories and symbolic richness, have transcended geographical and linguistic boundaries, reflecting the complex interweaving of biblical narratives within the Arab-Muslim cultural fabric.

The Israeli Context

Shlomit Landman, in her article "*Looking into Israeli Prevalent Girls' Names: Revealing Ideologies According to Foucauldian Discourse Analysis*", delves into the dynamics of prevalent girls' names in Israel from 1948 to 2015. Using Foucauldian discourse analysis, Landman examines how these names reflect social ideologies and historical trends. The study identifies that many of the most popular girls' names in Israel, such as "Sarah," "Rivkah," "Le'ah," and "Rachel," are derived from the Old Testament. These names not only carry significant cultural and religious weight but also reflect shifts in societal values and norms over time. The article examines only girls' names, which, while justified, leaves out the potential

comparisons and contrasts that could be drawn with boys' names. Including both genders could provide a more balanced view of naming practices and their social implications.

Shared Themes and Insights

Both studies highlight several shared themes regarding the use and significance of biblical names in corresponding contexts:

1. Cultural Integration and Phonetic Adaptation:
   - In Algeria, biblical names have been adapted to fit the phonetic and linguistic norms of Arabic dialects. For example, "Moussa" for Moses and "Youcef" for Joseph demonstrate how these names have been phonetically adjusted while retaining their original biblical connotations.
   - Similarly, in Israel, the adaptation of biblical names is seen in the use of abbreviated theophoric names like "Eliran" and "Li'el," reflecting a blend of ancient tradition with modern linguistic preferences. Although the article mentions phonological patterns, it does not delve deeply into the reasons behind phonetic changes in names. A more detailed analysis of linguistic shifts and their sociocultural drivers would strengthen the study.
2. Symbolic and Historical Significance:
   - The historical and symbolic significance of these names is paramount. In Algeria, the enduring presence of biblical names highlights the cultural and religious heritage of the region, serving as a testament to the historical interplay between different civilizations and religions.
   - In Israel, the persistent popularity of biblical names underscores their deep-rooted presence in Jewish culture and tradition, reflecting both continuity and change in societal values over decades.
3. Sociopolitical Contexts:

- o The sociopolitical landscapes of both countries have influenced the use and perception of biblical names. In Algeria, the names reflect a blend of Islamic and pre-Islamic traditions, navigating the complexities of identity in a predominantly Muslim society.

- o In Israel, the revival and adaptation of biblical names are closely linked to Zionist ideologies and the formation of a national identity, where names like "Tamar" and "Ya'el" symbolize both historical continuity and modern assertiveness.

However, the Yamina Taibi-Maghraoui's study focuses exclusively on the city of Mostaganem, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions of Algeria. Different regions may have varying practices and influences that are not captured in this study. The sample size of forty-two names (21 first names and 21 family names) may not be large enough to draw broad conclusions about the use of biblical names across Algeria. A larger sample would provide a more comprehensive understanding. Besides that, the research is based on data from a single year (2020), which may not fully capture the trends and changes over time.

Both articles employ robust methodological frameworks to analyse the evolution and significance of biblical names: Taibi-Maghraoui uses a comprehensive linguistic analysis to categorize and understand the phonetic modifications of biblical names in Algerian civil registers, highlighting their historical evolution and cultural significance. Landman utilizes Foucauldian discourse analysis to explore the social ideologies reflected in the prevalence and adaptation of girls' names in Israel, providing a nuanced understanding of how these names function within various social discourses. While the Foucauldian approach is innovative, the article heavily relies on this single theoretical perspective. This reliance may limit the

consideration of other relevant sociological or linguistic theories that could provide additional insights.

The exploration of biblical names, as presented in these two articles, underscores the profound and multifaceted roles that names play in cultural and linguistic landscapes. In Algeria, biblical names serve as a bridge between past and present, weaving a tapestry of historical and cultural continuity. In Israel, these names reflect dynamic shifts in societal values, resonating with both traditional and modern sensibilities. By examining these names through rigorous linguistic and sociocultural lenses, Taibi-Maghraoui and Landman provide invaluable insights into the enduring legacy and evolving significance of biblical names. Their studies contribute to a deeper understanding of how names, as carriers of cultural and historical narratives, continue to shape and reflect the identities of communities across different religions.

Significance of Biblical Anthroponyms in Time and Space

The intersection of biblical names and non-religious contexts offers a profound glimpse into the ways in which religious names transcend their sacred origins to become embedded in everyday cultural and linguistic practices. By examining the use and transformation of biblical names in Mexico and Ukraine, "*Sagrada Familia en San Pablito*" by Francisco J. Peral Rabasa and "*Biblical Names in Ukraine: Regional Aspects*" by Svitlana Nasakina, this analysis highlights the enduring influence and evolving significance of these names in contemporary societies.

Biblical Names in San Pablito, Mexico

Francisco J. Peral Rabasa's study on the prominence of the names of the Holy Family - Jesus, Mary, and Joseph - in San Pablito, Puebla, Mexico, from 1874 to 1970, provides a compelling exploration of how these names have maintained their relevance in a non-religious context. Peral Rabasa's research highlights that despite predictions of their decline, names like

José have remained common, surpassing even Jesus in frequency, with María being the most prevalent among female names. The article could benefit from a comparative analysis with other regions or countries to highlight unique aspects of naming practices in San Pablito. This would provide a broader context and enhance the relevance of the findings.

Peral Rabasa's methodology, which included socionomastic analysis of civil registers, reveals the deep-rooted Catholic identity of the community, reflecting broader cultural and religious trends in Mexico. The study emphasizes that the persistence of these names is not merely a reflection of religious devotion but also a response to social and administrative practices, such as mandatory birth registration and the imposition of Christian names on indigenous populations. However, the article touches on the socio-cultural implications of naming practices but does not delve deeply into how these practices affect identity, social status, or community dynamics. More exploration in this area would enrich the study.

Biblical Names in Odesa, Ukraine

Svitlana Nasakina's research focuses on the use of biblical names in the Odesa region of Ukraine from 2014 to 2024. Utilizing a combination of statistical and qualitative methods, Nasakina's study examines the prevalence and classification of biblical names among students at Odesa State Agrarian University. The findings suggest that biblical names continue to be widely used, reflecting a deep cultural and religious heritage that spans centuries. The focus on Odesa may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions of Ukraine. Including more diverse geographic data could provide a more comprehensive national perspective. Moreover, the data is collected from a specific educational institution, which may not represent the broader population. Including data from various sources and institutions could mitigate this bias.

Nasakina's study underscores the influence of both the Old and New Testaments on naming practices. Names such as Mykhailo (Michael) and Danylo (Daniel) from the Old

Testament, and Ivan (John) and Anna (Ann) from the New Testament, remain popular. This persistence highlights the role of these names in maintaining cultural continuity and religious identity, even amidst significant historical and sociopolitical changes. The study mentions phonetic variations but does not delve deeply into the linguistic reasons behind these changes. A more detailed linguistic analysis could add depth to the understanding of naming practices.

Everything is known in comparison, or analogous and distinctive naming patterns

Both studies highlight several shared themes regarding the use and significance of biblical names in various contexts. In San Pablito, the names of the Holy Family have become an integral part of the cultural identity, reflecting the community's deep-rooted Catholic traditions. The persistent use of names like José and María underscores their symbolic significance in maintaining cultural continuity. In Odesa, the use of biblical names such as Mykhailo and Ivan illustrates a similar trend. These names serve as cultural touchstones that connect contemporary generations to their historical and religious heritage, fostering a sense of continuity and identity.

The sociopolitical landscapes of both regions have influenced the use and perception of biblical names. In Mexico, the imposition of Christian names on indigenous populations during colonial times has led to the widespread adoption of these names, which have since become deeply embedded in the cultural fabric. In Ukraine, the suppression of religion during the Soviet era and the subsequent revival of religious traditions have shaped naming practices. The consistent use of biblical names reflects a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and religious influences that continue to shape contemporary identity.

Both articles employ robust methodological frameworks to analyse the evolution and significance of biblical names. Peral Rabasa's study utilizes socionomastic methods to examine the frequency and significance of biblical names in civil registers. This approach provides a

comprehensive understanding of how these names function within the social and administrative practices of San Pablito. Nasakina employs a combination of statistical and qualitative methods to analyse the prevalence and classification of biblical names among students. This methodology allows for a detailed examination of naming trends and their cultural implications in the Odesa region.

The exploration of biblical names in non-religious contexts, as demonstrated in the studies from Mexico and Ukraine, underscores the profound and multifaceted roles that names play in cultural and linguistic landscapes. In both highly different regions, biblical names serve as markers of historical narratives, religious influences, and social identities, transcending their original religious connotations to become integral elements of national and local identities. By examining these names through rigorous linguistic and sociocultural lenses, Peral Rabasa and Nasakina provide invaluable insights into the enduring legacy and evolving significance of biblical names.

Biblical Anthroponyms in Literary Contexts

Biblical names have long transcended their sacred origins to become integral elements of non-religious naming practices. By analysing the sociolinguistic and cultural implications of these names within the contexts of Nigerian and Portuguese literature, specifically through the works of Wole Soyinka and José Saramago, we gain insights into the ways in which biblical names continue to shape contemporary narratives and identities.

Wole Soyinka's Use of Biblical Names

Wole Soyinka, Africa's first Nobel laureate in literature, is renowned for his rich, symbolic use of names in his plays. In "Biblical Names in Selected Plays of Wole Soyinka," Idowu Odebode and his colleagues examine how Soyinka employs biblical names to imbue his

characters with profound symbolic meanings. The study focuses on four of Soyinka's tragedies: "The Strong Breed," "The Road," "Death and the King's Horseman," and "King Baabu".

Soyinka's characters, such as Eman, Ifada, and Sunma in "The Strong Breed," are imbued with biblical allusions that serve to enhance their roles within the narrative. For example, Eman is a clipped form of Emmanuel, which means "God with us," reflecting his Christ-like role as a sacrificial figure who saves his community. Ifada, derived from the word "farthing," signifies poverty and helplessness, akin to the poor widow in the Bible who gave her last coin. Sunma, an analogy of Samson, embodies strength and moral weakness, similar to the biblical Samson.

In "The Road," the character Samson represents strength and defiance, yet his actions subvert the traditional biblical narrative. He is depicted as a thug who challenges authority figures, highlighting the irony and complexity of his name. Similarly, the character Particulars Joe, a corrupt police officer, contrasts sharply with the biblical Joseph's faithfulness and integrity, showcasing Soyinka's critique of societal corruption.

In "Death and the King's Horseman," names such as Simon Pilkings and Olunde are used to reflect themes of cultural clash and sacrifice. Simon Pilkings, an analogy of Simon Peter, disrupts traditional rites, embodying the themes of ignorance and cultural arrogance. Olunde, a name formed through analogy, signifies a child who returns to fulfil his cultural duty, paralleling the biblical theme of sacrifice and redemption.

José Saramago's Exploration of Biblical Names

José Saramago's "O Evangelho Segundo Jesus Cristo" delves into the life of Jesus with a blend of historical fiction and deep philosophical inquiry. Kleber Eckert and Maiquel Röhrig's study on Saramago's work highlights the intricate use of biblical names to explore themes of identity, sacrifice, and human experience. Saramago's choice of names is deeply symbolic, connecting the narrative to broader theological and existential questions.

Saramago's Jesus is portrayed with a nuanced human dimension, emphasizing his struggles and doubts. The name Jesus, central to the narrative, is not just a reference to the biblical figure but a means to question and reinterpret his story. Other names, such as Joseph and Mary, are used to explore themes of familial bonds and societal expectations. Saramago's narrative challenges traditional biblical interpretations, using these names to question the nature of divinity and humanity. The selection of names for analysis may be subjective though. The criteria for choosing which names to analyse in depth are not fully explained, which could introduce bias in the study. Besides that, the focus on etymological origins may overshadow other significant aspects, such as phonetic qualities, narrative functions, or character development influenced by names. A more balanced approach considering these factors would provide a fuller picture.

Both Soyinka and Saramago use biblical names to create complex, layered narratives that challenge traditional interpretations and highlight contemporary issues. The shared use of these names in non-religious contexts underscores their enduring cultural significance and adaptability.

In both Nigerian and Portuguese contexts, biblical names serve as powerful tools for social commentary. Soyinka's use of names like Eman and Samson critiques societal corruption and moral decay, while Saramago's portrayal of Jesus and Mary reexamines religious narratives to highlight human frailty and resilience. These adaptations reflect a broader cultural dialogue, where biblical names are recontextualized to address modern concerns and values. The studies would benefit from comparative analysis with other local or global literary works to highlight unique or common trends in the use of biblical names. This could provide a richer context for understanding the authors' use of names.

The study of biblical names in the works of Wole Soyinka and José Saramago reveals the profound impact of these names on contemporary literature and culture. By reinterpreting

biblical names within non-religious contexts, both authors create rich, multidimensional narratives that engage with themes of identity, sacrifice, and societal critique.

"Afterlife" of the Biblical Anthroponyms in Romania

The transition of biblical names from sacred texts to non-religious usage is a fascinating phenomenon in linguistic studies. The article "*La présence de déonymes religieux dans le vocabulaire de la langue roumaine*" by Daniela Butnaru and Ana-Maria Prisacaru provides an in-depth exploration of this process within the Romanian language. The key findings of this study are focusing on how biblical names have been adapted and integrated into various non-religious contexts, and their implications for cultural and linguistic evolution.

Biblical names in Romanian have undergone significant lexicalization, where proper names transform into common nouns, adjectives, verbs, and even interjections. This process enriches the vocabulary and illustrates the dynamic nature of language evolution. Butnaru and Prisacaru explain that the transformation of proper names into common nouns, adjectives, or other parts of speech has been a subject of both international and Romanian linguistic studies, tracing its roots back to the works of scholars like Bruno Migliorini and Carlo Tagliavini.

The lexicalization process often involves the adaptation of names from the Old and New Testaments into forms that fit the phonetic and morphological norms of Romanian. For example, names such as Avram (Abraham), Daniel, Petru (Peter), Ioan (John), and Maria (Mary) have been adapted from their Greek and Latin forms, which were disseminated after the spread of Christianity. This adaptation demonstrates the integration of these names into the linguistic and cultural fabric of Romania.

The Role of Religion and Cultural Transmission

The integration of biblical names into Romanian culture has been facilitated primarily through religious practices and literature. Priests played a crucial role in popularizing these names by reading excerpts from the Bible and delivering homilies. Additionally, the influence of the Church and its calendar, which included saints' names, significantly impacted the naming conventions in Romanian society. This religious transmission is evident in the widespread use of names like Vasile (Basil), Gheorghe (George), and Andrei (Andrew), which are rooted in Christian traditions and have been localized to fit Romanian phonetics.

Semantic Evolution and Lexical Variability

One of the most intriguing aspects of biblical names in Romanian is their semantic evolution. As these names transitioned into common usage, they developed new connotations and meanings. For instance, the name "Caiafa" (Caiaphas) evolved to mean "hypocrite," and "Iuda" (Judas) came to signify a "traitor." These shifts reflect broader cultural attitudes and societal values. The article highlights that the lexicalization of these names is not always complete, as evidenced by the oscillation between capital and lowercase usage, indicating an ongoing process of semantic stabilization. It ought to be noted that the selection of sources might introduce bias, especially if certain types of texts (e.g., literary vs. colloquial) are overrepresented. A more balanced selection of sources would ensure a comprehensive analysis.

Butnaru and Prisacaru provide numerous examples of how biblical names have been transformed into common nouns with specific connotations. For instance, "goliat" (Goliath) is used to describe a person of great size or strength, and "matusalem" (Methuselah) denotes someone very old. These examples illustrate how biblical figures have become archetypes within the Romanian language, serving as references for particular traits or characteristics.

Sociolinguistic Implications

The sociolinguistic implications of these transformations are significant. The use of biblical names in non-religious contexts often carries connotative meanings that reflect societal attitudes. In journalism and literature, for example, these names are frequently used to critique or satirize contemporary figures and situations. The article notes that terms like "Dalila" (Delilah) and "Samson" are invoked to describe dubious political relationships, while "Iuda" is used to denounce political betrayal.

Moreover, the integration of these names into everyday language serves to reinforce cultural identity and continuity. The persistent use of biblical names, despite non-religiousization and modernization, underscores the deep-rooted influence of religious heritage on the Romanian lexicon. This continuity is seen in the sustained popularity of certain names and their evolving meanings within different social contexts. While the study includes both old and new sources, it does not explicitly address how socio-political changes over time have influenced the lexicalization of religious names. It is of greatest interest to find out whether communist Romania slow down the use of biblical and post-biblical anthroponyms. Including a more detailed historical analysis could add depth to the study.

The study of biblical names in secular contexts, as detailed by Butnaru and Prisacaru, provides a comprehensive understanding of how religious names are adapted and integrated into everyday language. This process of lexicalization not only enriches the vocabulary but also reflects broader cultural and societal changes. The semantic evolution of these names, their sociolinguistic implications, and their role in reinforcing cultural identity highlight the complex interplay between language, religion, and society.

By examining the historical, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of biblical names in Romanian, this foreword offers valuable insights into the dynamic nature of language evolution

and the enduring impact of religious heritage on non-religious naming practices. As language continues to evolve, the study of these names will remain a critical area of research for understanding the intersections of language, culture, and identity.

Conclusion

The dossier on biblical anthroponyms in secular contexts reveals the profound and multifaceted roles these names play across various cultures and historical periods. Through an interdisciplinary approach encompassing onomastics, socio-pragmatics, and cultural studies, the reviewed articles provide a comprehensive understanding of how biblical names, once deeply rooted in sacred texts, have permeated non-religious contexts, shaping and reflecting societal values, identities, and linguistic practices.

The main results of the studies underscore the enduring relevance of biblical names and their integration into everyday language and cultural practices. In Cuba, the persistence and adaptation of biblical names, such as José, Juan, Pedro, and Rafael, reflect broader sociopolitical and cultural shifts, highlighting their significance in shaping cultural identities. Similarly, in Algeria and Israel, the phonetic adaptations and symbolic significance of biblical names illustrate the complex interplay between historical, cultural, and religious influences. The studies on Mexico and Ukraine further emphasize the role of these names as markers of cultural continuity and identity, transcending their original religious connotations to become integral elements of national and local identities.

However, several limitations and weaknesses were identified across the reviewed articles. Many studies are geographically limited, focusing on specific regions or communities, which restricts the generalizability of their findings. The temporal scope of some studies is also narrow, often based on data from specific periods, which may not capture long-term trends and changes. There is a noticeable gender imbalance, with a greater focus on male names,

overlooking potential differences in the use and significance of female names. Additionally, an over-reliance on specific theoretical frameworks and secondary data sources may limit the consideration of other relevant perspectives and introduce inherent biases. The lack of comparative analysis with other regions or cultural contexts, insufficient exploration of sociocultural implications, and minimal linguistic analysis further constrain the comprehensiveness of these studies.

To address these limitations and fill research gaps, future research should expand the geographic and temporal scope to include a broader range of regions and longer periods, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of naming practices. Gender-inclusive research is essential to uncover potential gender-specific trends and significances. Diversifying theoretical frameworks and incorporating multiple perspectives will provide a more nuanced analysis. Comparative studies with other cultural and linguistic contexts will offer broader insights, while in-depth exploration of sociocultural implications will enhance the understanding of naming practices' impact on identity, social status, and community dynamics. Balanced data selection, detailed phonetic and pragmatic analyses, and the use of visual aids will improve the accessibility and richness of the findings. Lastly, discussing the broader implications of these findings for other languages and cultural contexts will enhance the relevance and impact of the research.

By addressing these limitations and incorporating the suggested areas for further research, future studies can provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the use and significance of biblical names in secular contexts. This approach will enrich the field of onomastics and contribute to a deeper understanding of cultural and linguistic practices, highlighting the dynamic interplay between religious heritage and non-religious adaptation.

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