## Editorial

# Toponomastics, theory, and method. Portraits of tradition and innovation

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# Foreword

Receiving an invitation to organize a thematic issue is always a joy and undoubtedly a challenge. This is the second issue that we organize since 2020, each with its unique proposals. While, on the one hand, the Onomastics science has significantly advanced since 2000's due to the push forward from Maria Vicentina de Paula do Amaral Dick – whom we honor here for being a respected researcher, the beloved doctoral advisor of one of this issue's organizers, and a good person herself – on the other hand, recently there has been a growing interest in personal names studies or Anthroponomastics.

This fact eventually became evident during the two phases of the research project *Collecting data to the historiography of Onomastic Sciences in Brazil* (2016-2019), coordinated by Carvalhinhos and linked to the International Bibliography of Onomastic Sciences (IBOS), a working group (WG) that collects and reviews the onomastics literature in the world and is reported to the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS). During this period, the WG's works followed a quantitative view, which is extremely important for us to trace back the evolution line of onomastics research in Brazil and realize how much Dick's efforts paid off. Additionally, it allowed us to understand how these studies spread out through Brazil due to the expansion of graduate programs from the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

One of this issue's organizers has been a professor and researcher for many years now and also has extensive experience as a peer reviewer, providing reviews for both Brazilian and international journals. Her expertise also pinpoints a fact: although researches involving Toponomastics are highly frequent, Anthroponomastics has been growing – maybe due to the drive from project *Novo Dicionário de Nomes em Uso no Brasil* [New Dictionary of Names in Use in Brazil], led by Prof. Juliana Soledade Barbosa Coelho (Universidade Federal da Bahia

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UFBA) and Amaral & Seide's (2022) recently released book about anthroponymy in Brazil
and perhaps consolidating itself as a preferred discipline among many beginner researches, at least in Brazil.

Nevertheless, Toponomastics remains the centerpiece of Brazilian Onomastics. Despite the increasingly interest in personal names studies recently, this is undeniable that several wellestablished groups have been yielding studies about place names in all education levels – from undergraduate to postdoctoral research – in all regions of the country.

The need for a continued self-assessment is a fact, either in corporate terms, for teams or individually. In this vein, a thematic issue absolutely serves as an excellent thermometer and trigger for self-assessments, showcases to the readers the various projects interests and paths, and therefore adds up insights to a state of the art. This issue is in part a thermometer. In part because obviously its contributions do not represent the entire research scenario in Brazil due to its limited scope.

However, it does represent a portion of current research interests not only through the articles, but also the works cited. This collection makes up a *portrait*, a word we chose for the header of this editorial. The term "portrait" is automatically tied to two other words often mentioned in the interviews: *mirror* and *photograph*. This editorial both highlights the *frames* of the Brazilian toponymy and general toponymy, and also shows one of the more classical assumptions of toponyms function, which is stated by the interviewee Prof. Arcamone: "[...] toponyms are often photographs of the nature of the places; cartographic knowledge; knowledge of the history of that landscape [...]". As we can notice, novelties and legacies spring up from the articles and interviews, and therefore the call-for-papers grounding is valid. It invited authors to submit papers on tradition and innovation in Toponomastics, allowing us to assess the current state of research in Toponomastics not only in Brazil but even in other locations.

In addition to capturing contributions from several regions in Brazil to enable this analysis on the research studies directions and the desired portraits, we received a few insights from other countries. One of them delves into the Chilean toponymic system, which shares similarities with the Brazilian toponymic system – particularly in the presence of languages in contact – and provides information of interest for any researcher. There are also two articles assembling different toponymic frames in Africa. Both helps us to understand the dynamics of Portuguese toponymy in other colonized regions, and the opposite process, i.e., the decolonial one that has taking place in the last decades. Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique spotlight this issue through representing two foreign countries. Two other international works – one from Portugal and another from Italy – are included in the form of interviews, which we will address in a dedicated section following the articles.

The authors had full autonomy to decide on the terminology, theory and methods used, thus they are accountable for the whole content in their articles. This, however, does not imply

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that the organizers agree with all positions. This is a beneficial disagreement and that is why we choose a few aspects to detail in this editorial, which introduces the articles and also provides topics for thought. We kindly ask the reader's special attention to topics related to the terminology used in Toponomastics, in particular to the place name structure in Portuguese and its classification. Despite receiving intensive looks in Brazil, there are still interpretation mistakes, either in the relationship between the natural or man-made feature and its name (the whole structure of the toponym, or a kind of "toponymic phrase", the *sintagma toponímico*<sup>1</sup>), or the classification to be used for each of its elements.

## **1** On tradition and innovation

*Tradition* and *innovation* were the motto chosen by the organizers of this thematic issue in the call for papers. Our objective was not simply to launch an attractive proposal that would capture many contributions. Our key intent was to understand to which extent the researchers would respond to our call:

This thematic issue is open to receive all kinds of toponymic studies, preferably theoretical and methodological contributions. We especially welcome papers exploring the interrelation between the linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions.<sup>2</sup>

At first, our main goal was to receive submissions that did were not a mere replica of the toponymic taxonomy – a traditional method in Brazilian studies. Instead, we aimed at those works with alternative theoretical and methodological approaches, pushing the tradition towards innovation. To further discuss both concepts, first we bring here the definition of *tradition* according to Philosophy, based on the brilliant Nicola Abbagnano's dictionary. According to Abbagnano (2007, p. 966 and 967 and the following, emphasis from original<sup>3</sup>), tradition is also

A cultural heritage, transmission of beliefs or know-how from a generation to the other. In the field of philosophy, resorting to T.[radition] implies to acknowledge the *truth* of T.[radition], which, from this standpoint, turns into a guarantee of truth and sometimes is the only achievable guarantee. [...] For Aristotle, his own philosophy means to free the T.[radition] from its mythical elements, thus, to discover the genuine T.[radition] while grounding itself in the guarantee provided by this same T.[radition].

This could involve, according to Abbagnano, fabricating documents so that tradition would not be undermined. The author states (2007, p. 967) that the concept of tradition "has not changed but maintains the appearance or promise of such guarantee". After the Greeks, the idea of tradition strongly reemerges throughout the European Romanticism in the late 18<sup>th</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> *Sintagma toponímico* is a term used in Brazil to express the articulation between the geographical element and the name itself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Available at: <u>https://www.revistas.usp.br/linhadagua/announcement/view/1322</u>. Accessed: Apr. 19, 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> We have opted for a free translation into English whenever quoting texts in other languages.

century. Abbagnano takes from Hegel the idea that a tradition cannot remain stalled, since it is up to its heirs to yield fruit from this heritage:

Hegel explicitly appreciated the T.[radition] and insisted on its divine aspect: "T.[radition] is not an unmoving statue, but lives and flows like an unruly river that grows even more as it is farther from its source. [...] What each generation has produced in the fields of science and spirit is a heritage to which the whole world before has contributed with its economy [...]. And inheriting is at the same time receiving the heritage and making it bear fruit" (ABBAGNANO, 2007, p. 967).

By applying Abbagnano's philosophical definition of *tradition*, – a definition applicable to other realities – for this thematic issue's goal, the organizers intended to first check whether the tradition in Brazilian Toponomastics research represented by Dick's method (thesis defended in 1980 and published in 1990) is bearing fruit beyond her toponymic taxonomy method, provided that a great amount of scientific studies in Brazil recur to this tradition, sometimes mistaking theory for method. At the other end of this line is innovation. What new winds are shaking the traditional Dickian tree? Is this a soft chill or a fierce storm? In other words: what are the different approaches in the Brazilian toponymic research?

And Abbagnano, in the same entry *tradition*, gives us a clue on the concept of innovation, then undressed from the garments it currently carries as a "trendy word" found in all the current discourse, including the governments': "The Enlightenment rose up against T.[radition], claiming that its heritage is mostly a mistake, a prejudice, or a superstition, through turning into the judgement of critical reason to challenge it [...]" (ABBAGNANO, 2007, p. 967).

To what extent is there innovation in the toponymic research in Brazil? The answer to this question is not within the limited scope of this thematic issue. First of all, this editorial section aims to pose this question to the Brazilian researchers so that they can make it themselves and, in a self-assessment process, to verify to what extent their research makes the Dickian tradition bear fruit just like the Enlightenment way, i.e., moving beyond the toponymic taxonomy.

# 2 The terminology problem: author's choices and the position of the organizers

The entire editorial process focuses on taking to the scientific community a few contributions or at least original views analyzed through blind reviews by ad-hoc referees. Reviewers and their scientific advice often engage in a "dialogue" with the authors, always recommending improvements. Throughout this process, the organizers can also make requests. In the particular case of this issue, this dynamic provided interesting remarks, which allows us to cover its two points: tradition and innovation.

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As mentioned above, generations of researchers have been using the method adapted by Dick for the Brazilian reality. We say *adapted* because the classification via taxonomy is not exclusive nor did it arise in Brazil. Dick (1990 [1980]) made a methodological proposition adapted to the Brazilian scenario, and it has been revisited sometimes by several authors. While this may not completely solve all problems, it is undoubtedly a step towards innovation and complex solutions that bear fruit from that heritage. Each contribution is like a brick in the even more solid foundation of Brazilian research in this field.

Additionally, tradition creates embodied practices that tend to feed back into the community. For example, the terminology, which, on the one hand, is necessary for understanding and developing the field, on the other may be outdated and require adjustments, replacements, or new assumptions. In this context, the organizers felt at ease to recommend certain modifications to the manuscripts. It is important to mention that English readers may think the following discussion does not make sense, but it is relevant to Brazilian readers.

One of the adjustments recommended are on the terms *acidente*<sup>4</sup> (literally, "landform", or "geographic feature"), which was frequently used in the papers received to describe the nature of one of the toponym elements. Dick's doctorate thesis, in 1980, was consistent with that period, even mirroring terms used in Canada and collected by Henri Dorion & Jean Poirier (1975), but in these fifty years the discussion moved into Geography, the field that provides us with this term. *Acidente físico* [natural feature] and *acidente antropocultural* [man-made feature] were fully accepted at that time, however, today we need to review them. Geography itself has several opinions on thar matter, so there is a multitude of definitions for *acidente antropocultural*.

Anyway, in more recent studies, the organizer Prof. Carvalhinhos and other authors in Brazil prefer to use the terms *entidade geográfica* [geographical feature] and *entidade* or *elemento físico* [natural feature] and *antropocultural* [man-made feature], given that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) recommends the term *geographical feature*, to which *entidade geográfica* attaches more naturally. Considering this, we officially propose new acronyms for these elements: EGF for *entidade geográfica física* [natural geographic feature] and EGH for *entidade geográfica humana* [man-made geographic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Brazilian term *acidente* comes from the French word *accident* (refer to Dorion). A few years ago, it was used to mean a landform or geographical feature, but also means a disaster, a car crash, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> For Guerra (1987, p. 3, emphasis added), for instance, "acidente geográfico" is the proper term to define "[...] any landform that shows contrasts with other forms that are close to it". Medeiros et al. (1973, p. 2, emphasis added), define "acidentes" as "Any landform that shows dissemblance or contrasts with those close to it", a concept that is closely related to the land level differences for these authors. Pena (2023, s.p., emphasis added) argues that "An 'acidente geográfico' is a generic term used to refer to any alteration or transformation that occurs on the earth surface". And Tiradentes (2021, p. 21, emphasis added) proposes a definition that emphasizes dynamism, where "An 'acidente geográfico' is a mark in the landscape that represents features of a geological past that is continually transformed due to external and internal agents, thus bringing to itself a representative cultural portrait of a society that can transform it into a synonym of place or belonging".

feature] consistent with UNGEGN's proposition, thus replacing the acronyms AF and AH, respectively.

As the readers may notice, the terminology matter often gives rise to questions and discussions, and this issue is no exception. That is why we give significant focus to it in this editorial, in a double approach. Firstly, we address the need to update some terms, as explained in the previous paragraphs. Secondly, we acknowledge the ongoing evolution resulting from new studies, which leads to the creation of novel terms and the adaptation of international terms to Portuguese.

In the organization process, we encountered a common issue of attempting to translate terms used in Brazil into English in abstracts and keywords. This is a problem due to the lack of terminological uniformity both within the country and globally. This point is addressed through requests from international organizations, such as UNGEGN (2002), which provides a multilingual glossary, and ICOS, whose Terminology Working Group<sup>6</sup> is gradually incorporating terms used by associated countries on its website. Their future goal is to supply terminological equivalences to the international scientific community, which will aid researchers in their works and prevent errors in choosing inappropriate keywords.

The term overlapping is not the only cause of terminological diversity. It is also related to which onomastics school of thought the author belongs or the context entangled. Outside Brazil, therefore, it is not uncommon to find terms that do not exist in the Brazilian academia or that are unknown to most authors. We highlight the term *godonyms*, related to street names. The term is more applied in Europe, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. In general, researchers in Brazil are more used to the term *odonym* (also spelled *hodonym*) and *odotoponym*, a taxon indicating that the meaning of the specific element refers to roads, streets, etc. This matter is better discussed in section 3.1.1.

Other terms may seem odd due to the mental crystallization that affects the Brazilians. This is the case of the term *indígena* [a Portuguese word for native groups in general] which is so closely associated by Brazilians with traditional Brazilian Peoples that it can seem odd to them when the term is not applied to Brazilian groups, specifically, or to Amerindian Peoples. As the readers will see, the term is also recurrent with the same meaning – aboriginal people – in other settings but referring to the native peoples of the mentioned places, as is the case of Mozambique.

There is also the problem of unusual or misused terms. We may cite two examples: one case, quite frequent (not only in this issue), involves a rather old mistake between two linguistic terms. While, in everyday language, they can be considered close synonyms, for Linguistics they are different, although their distinction is subtle. This is the case of the pair *designation/denomination*, to be addressed first in section 2.1. Secondly, we include an unusual

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Available at: <u>https://icosweb.net/publications/onomastic-terminology/</u>. Accessed: Apr. 17, 2023.

term tied to a mix-up of citations that blurs the origin of the term, a history fed back in other articles: the term *oniônimo* from item 2.2. In fact, it seems to be a Brazilian creation, because there is no reference in the international literature. For this reason, we are going to keep the term in its Brazilian Portuguese form, *oniônimo*, instead of trying to translate it into English<sup>7</sup>. The closer typology to describe this term would be *chrematonyms*, but they cannot be considered as synonyms.

### 2.1 The pair designation/denomination

The pair of terms in focus, designation/denomination, recurrently appears in papers received for this issue and other works, including theses and dissertations. The major problem in this case stems from an unsubstantiated synonym, although the terms do correlate and the nuance of meaning that distinguishes them is quite slight. This synonymized usage is acceptable in ordinary oral communication, but is inconvenient within the onomastic terminology, and seem to be related to Dick's writings from 1980's and 1990's, where the author indistinctly uses the terms *designation, designative, denomination* and other variances. According to Petit (2012, p. 3), this is inherited from the Saussurean viewpoint, an obstacle to the discussion and to the proper differentiation between the concepts, provided that

The first obstacle is the prevalence of an essentialist conception of language in which the language is the source, the means and the end of all questioning about itself. Resulting from a Saussurean thought, the essentialism rejects any consideration of the referent in the semantic and semiotic characterization of lexical units (PETIT, 2012, p. 3).<sup>8</sup>

This misunderstanding was duly corrected in the editorial process through extensive collaboration between authors and organizers. However, it was found in a few papers submitted to this issue and, as stated above, is still present in many other articles, dissertations, theses, course final papers, or even undergraduate projects reports. Thus, in this editorial we take the opportunity to make the reader aware of this. The terms *designation* and *denomination* depict different, though complemental, phenomena. Kleiber (2012, p. 46) defines designation as "[...] a term [...] used when the expression was not *a priori* assigned to the entity to which it refers, but nevertheless allows access to it through the information (descriptive or not) that it contains [...]<sup>w9</sup>. In that article, where odors are the subject of discussion, the author clarifies that the two terms do not mean the same thing:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> We maintain the same position in relation to the word *onionímia*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> From French: "Un premier frein est constitué par la prégnance d'une conception immanentiste de la langue pour qui cette dernière serait la source, le moyen et la finalité de tout questionnement sur elle-même. Issue d'une posture saussurienne, l'immanentisme rejette toute prise en compte du référent dans la caractérisation sémantique et sémiotique des unités lexicales".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> From French: "On parle de *désignation* quand l'expression n'a pas été attribuée *a priori* en propre à l'entité à laquelle elle renvoie, mais qu'elle permet néanmoins d'y accéder par l'intermédiaire des informations (descriptives ou autres) qu'elle comporte [...]" (emphasis from original).

*Denomination* is not synonym with *designation*, and one can only grant the status of designation and not denomination to expressions that capture or refer through these or those means to this or that odor, without having been conventionally attributed *a priori* to the odor in question. If we limit ourselves to the field of odor names, designations will, of course, also be restricted to the field of nominal constructions (KLEIBER, 2012, p. 46, emphasis from original).<sup>10</sup>

In one of her most widespread works in Brazil, the *Coletânea de Estudos* [Collected Studies], published in 1988 and reprinted in 1990 and 1992, Dick uses both terms interchangeably. The reader should be aware of this difference between concepts in order to apply them effectively, thus helping to fix this terminological mistake so common in articles about Onomastics.

When it comes to the terminology applied to onomastic studies, this seems to be the field most susceptible to transformations or innovations; some are welcome but others not so much. As a tradition under establishment, Brazilian toponym studies may undergo to unnecessary or occasional innovations. Unnecessary because they do not really contribute to the overall research itself, and occasional because these may only serve to a single investigation. But this is not the only terminology-related problem found when preparing this issue.

### 2.2 The ambiguous paternity of certain terms

Richard Coates (2014) wisely points out that anything can be an *onym* (*somethingonyms*). In addition to the issue of reference, the author quotes the problem of classification, since layers of meaning or singular meanings of the same name can attach to various referents and thus be subject to different semantic classifications, which should firstly be avoided, according to the author. In terms of taxonomic creation, one can add a term defining the semantic category or type to be classified (usually a Greek word) to *-onym*. This is how terminology innovations are born in Onomastics when required.

Questions may arise when the "paternity" of a term comes into play, which has occurred with the pair *oniônimo/onionímia* in this issue. Here, on first reading of one of the manuscripts the question arose due to a sometimes necessary, but not very helpful academic practice: the use of citations of citations (*apud*). This means to cite authors and authors cited by other authors, which may be a problem with time and the multiplication of works about a same subject. In this particular case, the paternity of the terms *oniônimo/onionímia* is not totally clear and the reader could infer that it was taken from José Leite de Vasconcellos (1928, p. 2), cited in the same paragraph. Instead, after checking the source *Antroponímia Portuguesa* [Portuguese Anthroponymy] we see that Vasconcellos is not the "father" of such terms.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> From French: "Dénomination n'est donc pas synonyme de désignation, et l'on ne pourra accorder qu'un statut de désignation et non de dénomination à des expressions qui saisissent ou renvoient par tel ou tel moyen à telle ou telle odeur, sans avoir été conventionnellement attribuées *a priori* en propre à l'odeur en question. Si l'on se limite au secteur des noms d'odeurs, les désignations seront, bien entendu, également restreintes au secteur des constructions nominales" (emphasis from original).

We then begin our search for the author of this terminology creation or innovation, which is no easy task. *Oniônimos* are defined as "[...] proper names of brands or manufacture items [...]" by Rodrigues (2022, p. 32), likely based on Souza (2019), whose dissertation *Criação lexical em textos publicitários: análise de oniônimos* (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais – UFMG) [Lexical creation in advertising texts: analysis of *oniônimos*, our translation] in turn seems to be based on Guérios (1973). It is a good example of bad terminological creation because it is misused, and there is no possible translation because the Greek roots are unclear.

Perhaps the mistake came up because Vasconcellos creates a "cat's cradle" to group all proper names that are neither toponyms nor anthroponyms: *panteônimos*<sup>11</sup>. Toponomastics and Anthroponomastics were already defined by Vasconcellos in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in his "Ensaios de onomatologia portuguesa" [Essays of Portuguese Onomatology], published in issue 1 from *Revista Lusitana* (1887). Four decades later, in 1928, Vasconcellos restates this definition in *Antroponímia Portuguesa* [Portuguese Anthroponymy], including one more category, *Panteonímia*, or miscellaneous names. Hence, it is not a fact that the term *oniônimo* was created by Vasconcellos, although the first author who uses it (and who is he/she?) was inspired by *panteônimos*. This ambiguity arises from the wording given by the authors to the paragraph where this term appears.

# **3** Problems in the interpretation of the toponym structure and insights on some usual practices

An issue such as this one, or any other publication that frames the production of a certain time period, can provide great reflections not only for readers who read the published papers, but also for editors and organizers. In this particular case, receiving articles from different parts of Brazil and the world allowed us to see peculiar options both for terminology, but also for methods, theories, and even manners to face place names as a linguistic unit. We extend a few words on this issue in the following section.

# **3.1 Syntax: the toponym structure and misinterpretation in generic and specific elements**

As noted above, the desire for innovation is valid and necessary. In contrast, the wish to interact with the usual methodology of toponymic taxonomy and simultaneously innovate can be a problem if the structure of the place name is not correctly interpreted.

Prof. Carvalhinhos' teaching experience as a professor of Toponomastics for almost 20 years shows us topics that come up both in the classroom and among younger and experienced

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> This is a term created by Vasconcellos, but it is not used by the academic community. It means "all names", from the Greek root *pan*- "all". We opted not to translate it into English.

researchers. Students make obvious and immediate questions related to the specific terminology. When they dig deeper, however, another aspect calls their attention: the taxonomy model. A student's usual question could be the following: If the toponym is made up by articulating an identified element or entity – whether it is constituted naturally, thus *natural*, or subject to human intervention, thus *man-made* – and always has a generic element, then why doesn't the toponymic taxonomy analyze it?

According to the taxonomy models used in Brazil, a semantic analysis usually is made on the specific element, i.e., the second part of the place name, a name given to a certain land feature, watercourse, town, etc. The generic element that identifies places is obviously relevant and tells a lot but cannot be semantically classified using the usual taxa. Hence, any river such as *Rio Pinheiros* ('pines river', EGF, river, SP), in the city of São Paulo, could be seen and analyzed as a toponym from several points of view. By classifying it based on its generic element, it will be a hydronym; for the standard toponymic taxonomy, it belongs to the class of phytotoponyms. By no means it could be interpreted as a hydrotoponym as it would deviate from the taxonomy established and mislead the readers, especially young researchers.

From this discussion derives the understanding of toponyms as having a structure articulated according to the nature of their source language. In Brazil, it is common to have toponyms with a specific element from Native languages and a generic element from Portuguese, thus resulting in the usual phrase positioning of generic element+specific element. The component taken as a specific element may, however, contain the original generic element, merged by the agglutinating nature of Tupi or other Native Brazilian languages.

Also, about the toponym structure, Dick's works usually focus more on the specific element due to her taxonomy proposition. For the author, the classification of a place name based on its component units, which comprises *simple* or *compound* toponyms, is exclusively made on the specific element. It is absolutely mandatory that this interpretation is correct, since the generic+specific elements structure shall always display a composition from these two integral terms to a place name, which does not necessarily mean that the toponym is a compound name.

Based on this line, a toponym such as the neighborhood of *Planalto Paulista* ('São Paulo's plateau', EGH, neighborhood, SP), in São Paulo, needs to be taken as a toponym with a compound specific element with a hidden generic element (neighborhood). Hence, *Planalto* is the first part of the specific element and, as per Dick (1990 [1980]), used for the semantic definition, i.e., a *geomorfotopônimo*<sup>12</sup>. It is worth noting that, had it had another composition where *planalto* ['plateau'] was the generic element, this place name would have a simple specific element – *Paulista* – and a different taxonomy classification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> It is a taxon proposed by Dick (1980 [1990]), composed of the Greek roots *geo-* "land"+*morphē* "form"+toponym. It is applied to all specific elements that refer to all topographical forms.

Another example pictures this very common doubt among beginner researchers. For instance, a toponym that refers to a watercourse within the city of São Paulo, in the region of Interlagos, the *Córrego Cordeiro* ('lamb creek', EGF, creek, SP). Structurally, it is a simple toponym as in this composition the word *córrego* is the generic element that defines the type of watercourse, followed by a single word in the specific term, *Cordeiro*. It is therefore a *zootopônimo*<sup>13</sup> in taxonomy terms, and also a hydronym from the generic element point of view.

It is worth noticing that highlighting the specific element to answer the question *why*?, one of the five *wh-words*<sup>14</sup> extensively stated in the English literature, is only one of the many ways to analyze a toponym. Urazmetova & Shamsutdinova  $(2017)^{15}$  list at least eleven different principles extracted from a great volume of data searched. Thus, analyzing the specific element's semantic field is covering only one of these principles.

The authors' freedom is considered and respected even when they disagreed with suggestions for changes in the manuscripts, so we make the reader aware that some articles may sustain the misconception of using taxa or semantic classification of the specific element to categorize the generic element. We therefore try to remedy it in this editorial. Our position is delineated in the following sub-section.

# **3.1.1** The ontology of geographical name: a glance at the generic element

It is also worth to highlight that analyzing a toponym from the ontological perspective of the generic element entails the choice of a different terminology, i.e., typologies that have already been mentioned by Dorion & Hamelin (1966), as well as discussed, rediscussed, and improved by several authors in recent decades. From what can be glimpsed in another book by Dorion & Poirier (1975)<sup>16</sup>, the most frequent use of terms formed of a specific element related to the semantic field of the object followed by a more general (or generic) element *-onym* dates

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> This is another taxon created by Dick, from the Greek root *zoo-* "animal"+toponym. We prefer not to translate it into English because it is not used or known by the international community.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> *Why, where, who, what, when*: the five *wh-words*. It refers to the five basic questions to be made in toponymic research: *What* (the object of questioning), *who* (the name-giver), *where, when* and *why*, which is directly connected to the name-givers' reasons. E.g., please refer to Blair & Tent (2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> The results showed by Urazmetova & Shamsutdinova (2017) are extremely relevant. They reviewed results of researches involving more than 30,000 toponyms. The studies came from the United Kingdom (a total of 15,000 toponyms analyzed by several authors) and the United States (17,000 toponyms). Based on these studies, whose varied approaches result from the very complexity of the toponym, the authors organized and grouped the data into eleven different principles. The approach of place name analysis from the semantical essence of specific elements – i.e., using the toponymic taxonomy – is only one of the eleven principles found.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> This fact can be inferred since, in some entries of their dictionary, Dorion & Poirier (1975) state that the term defined received a different name in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An example of this terminological replaced is shown in the entry *hydronymy* (original fr. *hydronymie*) and its equivalent *hydronomastique* (*hydronomastics*), designated as *fluvial onomastics* (original fr. *onomastique fluviale*) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Refer to Dorion & Poirier (1975, p. 64).

from the end of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is somewhat consistent with the expansion of studies around the world, the regular meeting of specialists to discuss their researches, and the creation of two major international associations, ICOS and the American Name Society (ANS).

In this sense, Urazmetova & Shamsutdinova (2017) list a few terms related to these ontological characteristics of the named object, some of which are familiar to Brazilian researchers, such as *hydronyms* and *oronyms*. The logic of the term composition is the same that governs the formation of a taxon within toponymic taxonomy, that is, there is a more general term and a more specific one. In this case, the typology that defines the ontology of an object comprises a first term, a specific portion, indicating the semantic essence of the object named, followed by a second term, generic portion, referring to the denominative condition, or *onym*<sup>17</sup>. Thus, unknown or uncommonly used terms in Brazil are mentioned, all formed in the same way.

Just as it is commonly found in the Sapir's (1961 [1911]) didactic division between *natural world* and *social world* for the lexical composition present in the most frequent dichotomies in Brazilian toponymic studies – natural features/man-made features; natural kind taxa/man-made kind taxa<sup>18</sup> –, Urazmetova & Shamsutdinova (2017) also follow this line and split the world and its denominations in "natural objects" and "man-made objects".

Among the names of natural objects, the authors include *hydronyms*, *oronyms* (from Greek  $\delta\rho\sigma\varphi$ , 'mountain'), *drymonyms* (from Greek  $\delta\rho\sigma\mu\phi\varsigma$  *drumós*, 'tree', 'forest', which could be adapted to Portuguese as *drumônimos*) and *insulonyms* (lat. *insula* 'island'). As with toponymic taxonomy in Brazil, these terms are mostly built up of Greek words, but also from Latin. These typologies may encompass subcategories, such as terms already adapted to Portuguese: *oceanônimos* (*oceanonyms*, names of oceans), *pelagônimos* (*pelagonyms*, names of seas), *potamônimos* (*potamonyms*, names of rivers), *limnônimos* (*limnonyms*, names of lakes), *espeleônimos* (*speleonyms*, names of caves, grottoes, springs, among others), etc.

On the other side, there are objects whose origin lies in the man's intervention into the landscape, i.e., *man-made features*. The main types outlined by Urazmetova & Shamsutdinova (2017) are horonyms (names of territories that have defined boundaries, such as political, historical, geographical or economic boundaries), oykonyms (names of settlements) and its subcategories astionyms (for urban settlements) and comonyms (related to rural settlements). The term *urbanonym*, more used in Brazil than the others above, refer to "local" objects, such

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> We can spot a generic element, characterized by suffix *-onym*, and a specific element in the formation of this typology that defines the ontological essence of objects based on which Dorion and Poirier (1975) significantly highlight in their book whenever they describe a term like these: "Comme les autres choronymes, l'odonyme est composé d'un terme générique et d'un terme spécifique" (DORION; POIRIER, 1975, p. 99). In other words, every place name receives a more specific and determining ontological classification based on its geographical term. Hence, every odonym is a toponym, but not every toponym is an odonym.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> As there is no correspondence between the Portuguese terms *taxes de natureza física* and *taxes de natureza antropocultural*, we have tried to adapt it into English to express the idea conceived in Portuguese terminology.

as blocks, streets, squares, alleys, avenues, theaters, museums, cinemas, train and subway stations, hotels, stores and other sites within a city. The key subtypes of urbanonyms are: odonyms (street names), agoronyms (square names), microhoronyms (names of neighborhoods), ergonyms (names of enterprises), ecclesionyms (names of religious temples), oikodomonyms (names of buildings), dromonyms (road names), nekronyms (names of cemeteries), microdrymonyms (names of forests, parks, and urban gardens).

All these categories defined by terms (some of them shown here for the first time in a Portuguese text about toponymy) can be used when the focus of the study is the named entity, i.e. the generic element, be it natural or man-made. Hence, the same toponym above, *Córrego Cordeiro* belongs to the typology of hydronyms and cannot be classified as a hydrotoponym, since it is erroneous. A toponym like *Serra do Mar* ('sea mountain', the Great Escarpment, EGF, mountain, SP) will be an *oronym* due to the ontological class of its generic element, but a *hydrotoponym* due to the classification of its specific element. When a researcher wants to classify a toponym by its essence or ontology, always governed by the generic element, they must use these typologies, and never the taxa, which are restricted to specific elements.

## 3.2. Are fichas lexicográfico-toponímicas mandatory?

Another matter brought up in this issue and that always comes up among young researchers concerns the presence of the *ficha lexicográfico-toponímica*<sup>19</sup>, proposed by Dick in the scope of the Toponymic Atlas of São Paulo Project (ATESP) and widely used in the surveys, as well as adapted and enhanced by other researchers. But is it always required?

The *ficha lexicográfico-toponímica* created by Dick (2004) has been in use for a long time with a slightly distinct function, that is, to store collected data in technical cards. The process was to record data in cardboard technical cards. One card for each place name. The new proposal aimed to bring the form designed in a card used in toponymic studies until the 1990s closer to what was already being done in Lexicography, thus leading to a standard form of the form that most Toponomastics researchers use today.

The form is undoubtedly relevant when the method is discussed or when the subject is precisely the focus of the discussion on the relevance or not of this working tool. For us, however, it seems that out of these contexts the file usage should be restricted to the background, especially when the researcher presents the results of his research in a scientific article, which should be objective, clear, and concise. This was a suggestion that the organizers provided to the authors who included files with unnecessary contextualization, a suggestion accepted and reasoned here.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Brazilian name for the ancient methodological practice originated from the use of paper technical cards or datasheets. It was used in past decades by toponymists and lexicographers. It is a frame or square that researchers fulfill with toponymic data until the present day.

### 3.3 The presence of Dick's proposed taxa

There is a ceaseless replication of the list of toponymic taxa proposed by Dick (in 1980 and subsequent years) in final papers, dissertations, theses, and even articles. This recurrence is only acceptable in the case of an illustrative example – that is, when the work does not intend to discuss the method – and our recommendation is to include it as an appendix if the authors wish to add it.

However, listing all the twenty-seven taxa in an article is of no use – again, only if its core is the method. These twenty-seven original taxa have already been adjusted, discussed, and supplemented by various authors, always using the source literature. The most common is the objective listing contained in the *Coletânea de Estudos* (1988, 1990, and 1992) supplementing the article *O problema das taxeonomias toponímicas* [The problem of toponymic taxonomies], where the author defines each of the taxa and provides the reader with examples from multiple Brazilian regions. We refer this text to readers unfamiliar with this classification model for more detailed information.

The key to understand the taxa from the toponymic taxonomy proposed by Dick also enables us to read and understand taxa proposed worldwide. The classification term or taxon is composed of a specific and a general portion, both taken from Greek, as mentioned above when we talked about the typology of the generic element. The taxon of the specific portion relates to the semantic domain represented (*phyto-, zoo-, hydro-, anthropos-, odo-, polis-*, among others), and the specific portion attaches to a general portion found in all the taxa and indicate the status or function of a place name, i.e., a *toponym*. Therefore, a *hydrotoponym* will be a toponym whose first part of the specific element<sup>20</sup> belongs to the semantic domain of *water*. Hence, place names such as *Águas de Lindóia* ('Lindoia waters', EGH, city, SP), *Lagoa Dourada* ('golden lake', EGH, city, MG), *Cachoeira do Mato* ('scrub waterfall', EGH, village, BA), and, from Dick's examples (1992), *Serra das Águas* ('water mountain', EGF, mountain, GO), *Córrego Novo* ('new creek', EGH, city, MG), and *Ribeirão Preto* ('black stream', EGH, city, SP) are hydrotoponyms.

### 3.4 Toponomastics – Discipline or science?

It is not unusual to mistake the status of *Toponomastics*. Some people consider it a science, but this is not correct. It should rather be regarded as a scientific discipline. Generally, any science can also be a discipline, as is the case of Chemistry, but not every discipline is a science too. There are even non-scientific disciplines. Abbagnano (2007, p. 136 et seq.) summarizes the definitions of science over time and according to the philosophical view:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> There are discussions and proposals that aim to analyze and classify in taxa all the elements of a complex specific element. Carvalhinhos particularly disagrees with this position for numerous reasons that do not fit the scope of this editorial and will be discussed in good time. Thus, the explanation we provide for now translates Dick's position (1980, 1990, and others).

A knowledge that includes to any extent or extension a guarantee of its own validity. The caveats expressed in the words "to any extent or extension" is included here to make the definition applicable to modern S.[cience], which does not claim to be absolute. Yet, in the traditional concept, S.[cience] includes the absolute guarantee of validity, and is therefore, as knowledge, the highest degree of certainty. The opposite of S.[cience] is *opinion* (v.), marked as a lack of guarantee of validity (ABBAGNANO, 2007, p. 136, emphasis from original).

Science is a study of a reality through experimentation with a proper theoretical scope, always seeking to clarify the nature of its object by designing and testing or rejecting theses, which makes it advance towards the "truth" from ancient philosophers, as stated by Abbagnano. On the other hand, a scientific discipline uses this knowledge provided by science to achieve given goals mainly using scientific methods. Therefore, Onomastics is a lexicon science, and Toponomastics and Anthroponomastics are two of its major scientific disciplines.

## 4 A few words on the articles and their authors

As previously announced, the concepts of *tradition* and *innovation* guide this thematic issue on Toponomastics and its trends. The call for papers gathered contributions that illustrate these tendencies and were submitted by researchers from different regions of Brazil and other countries, which makes it possible to sort the nine accepted articles into three distinct groups.

The first group covers the classical approach of Brazilian place names. *Rescuing memories: the toponym of the Cabeças neighborhood in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais* was written by Fernanda Kelly Mineiro Fernandes (graduate student at UFMG) and Soélis Teixeira do Prado Mendes (Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto – UFOP). The authors analyze *Cabeças* ['heads'], the name of a neighborhood in the municipality of Ouro Preto (Minas Gerais), aiming to recover a part of the cultural memory dated back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when Ouro Preto was called Vila Rica. The authors take Dick's theoretical and methodological premises (1992) to analyze this toponym also using the stories of citizens and take a Labovian direction by observing semantic and formal aspects of the names in the past and present. Pursuant to this choice, the authors discuss linguistic and extralinguistic data related to the toponym *Cabeças*, arriving on the motivations that guided the selection of this place name, as well as its relations to the former Vila Rica.

The second paper in this group, *Toponymy, lexicon and culture: the activity of naming in narratives about the feast of Nossa Senhora da Abadia (Jataí, Goiás State)*, is from Rennika Lázara Dourado Cardoso, Lidiane Silva Araújo Guimarães (graduate students at Universidade Federal de Catalão – UFCAT), and Vanessa Regina Duarte Xavier (UFCAT). By adding to their lexical database the stories of local people involved in the festivities of Nossa Senhora da Abadia, the authors study the denominations found in the route of this popular feast and identify motivational convergences that reveal the closeness of the nominator to the celebration locality.

The last article in this cluster is entitled *Toponyms as an exclusionary feature: an analysis on the names of avenues, streets and side streets in the city of Oeiras, state of Piauí,* by Messias dos Santos Santana (Universidade Estadual do Piauí – UESPI) and Layane Albuquerque de Moura (undergraduate student at UESPI). Both authors examine the public street toponyms of Oeiras (Piauí) by tracing a motivation pattern of this urban toponymy and, at the same time, noting the social and political elements that are present and absent in these geographical names. The contrasts are highlighted, pinpointed, and briefly discussed taking into account some theoretical reflections from Critical Toponymy. This takes the article closer to those in the next group and the new winds that drive forward the traditional model from Dick (1992).

At the other end of the traditionalist spectrum – or those that majorly rely on this basis for toponym analysis – some articles show a few samples and innovative approaches to different aspects, domains, and portions of Brazilian toponymy, connected to procedures that start and move along paths still little traveled. In *Heterographic Bahia*, Patrícia Andréa Borges (graduate student at the Universidade Estadual de Campinas – UNICAMP) provides with an overview of the different spellings of the toponym Bahia throughout five centuries, the period that precedes the graphical stabilization of this geographical name. The author uniquely investigates three less frequent forms found in the *Historical Dictionary of Brazilian Portuguese*, names collected in documents from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, then reflecting and presenting the spelling thought at the times of the records. As a result, this article is connected to Toponomastics and Historical Linguistics studies.

The article *Contributions of the hydronymic study of Tocantins: from official documents to the classroom*, by Verônica Ramalho Nunes (graduated at Universidade Federal do Norte do Tocantins – UFNT) and Karylleila dos Santos Andrade (Universidade Federal do Tocantins – UFT) reveals relevant and urgent thematic innovations through the introduction of Toponomastics into the school. Grounded on national and state curriculum guidance (National Curriculum Framework and Curriculum Frameworks of the Department of Education of Tocantins), the article describes a proposal of workshop focused on toponymy and teaching, thus providing means for, in an interdisciplinary way, Middle School students to have access to linguistic and extralinguistic sides through the toponymic lexicon.

Also disruptive is *From Gonçalo Gonçalves to General Câmara, buried toponyms: Pedro Nava and the memory that rests under the asphalt of a very wide avenue*, by Antonio Rafael Marçal da Silva (graduate student at Universidade de São Paulo – USP) and Martin Jayo (USP). Leading the reader to the names and the past of a currently extinct avenue in the city of Rio de Janeiro – based on book *Baú de Ossos* ([Chest of Bones], by writer Pedro Nava) – through the perspective of Literary Onomastics, the article is groundbreaking in all its course and extent and reviews the memories from this special background.

The last set of articles in this issue gathers manuscripts that analyze the toponymy of other countries, mixing innovative and classical theory and methodology. In *An initial* 

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description of the toponyms of the Autonomous Sector of Bissau, Baticã Braima Ença Mané (graduate student at USP) and Amanda Macedo Balduino (postdoctoral fellow at UNICAMP) construct a toponym profile from the Autonomous Sector of Bissau (Guinea-Bissau), listing linguistic and sociocultural data. Although rooted on toponymic taxonomy, the theme and purposes of the research are largely innovative provided that the toponymic literature has few works focused on this region. In fact, the discussion of language policies related to language contact in this location and under these circumstances is unprecedented. This preliminary review of Bissau's toponymy both offers reflections on the formation of these denominations and evidences the presence and status of Portuguese in a multilingual setting. As the authors point out, the scope of contributions is even greater, since they use documents and investigations that expand the pool of studies concerning the toponymy of countries on the African continent within the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP).

In *Hispanic toponymy of Chile: linguocultural and linguopragmatic approach*, the Russian researcher Irina A. Martynenko (Kutafin Moscow State Law University – MSAL) conducts a study on Chilean toponymy in Spanish from a traditionalist viewpoint, and yet bears new developments in different fields and features. The article will thus draw the attention of the Brazilian reader both for its methodological diversity – closer to the mechanisms proposed by George R. Stewart (1975) – and some of the terms used. Additionally, the author evaluates the analyzed denominations that cover a broader context, that of Latin American toponymy.

The triad of international articles of this set about general toponymy is completed by *The persistence or unofficial use of colonial toponyms in Maputo city, Mozambique*, by José Jorge Mahumane (graduate student at Universidade Eduardo Mondlane – UEM) and Joel das Neves Tembe (UEM). There, the authors look at the place names of Maputo (Mozambique), former Lourenço Marques, from an innovative view, by applying Critical Toponymy and other theoretical inputs to analyze colonial and post-colonial place names. This research, therefore, makes use of a recent theoretical tool to deal with several aspects of this city toponymy under different political regimes. The innovative spirit of the article is evident in its whole body, also following paths and reaching domains still little developed within the CPLP.

## 5 Interviews: the opportunity to meet key researchers

This issue also includes two additional works that brighten up the set of nine articles: two interviews with international researchers renowned in their areas of activity. The interviewees come from two countries with different traditions: Portugal and Italy. Actually, both interviews were conducted with the help of the organizers, who made some questions of great interest to Brazilian readers. One was carried out in Portuguese and is closer to our reality since it deals with Portuguese toponymy; the other, in Italian/English, presents valuable information to Portuguese-speaking and non-Portuguese-speaking audiences.

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In Portugal, Prof. Dr. Mônica Maria Soares Santos (postdoctoral fellow at USP) interviewed Dr. José d'Encarnação, a toponymist in virtue of his career as a retired Professor at Universidade de Coimbra (UC), and a specialist in Epigraphy. The interview, collected between late September and early October 2022, reports how d'Encarnação engaged with Toponomastics and details his experience as a researcher on Roman Epigraphy and his work about historical and linguistic aspects involved in place names. Moreover, d'Encarnação talks about the current scenario of toponymic studies in Portugal and a few relevant topographic data on Portuguese toponymy, illustrated with photographs.

The second interview, conducted between December 2022 and January 2023 in Italy, shows the vast experience of a renowned onomastician. Prof. Dr. Giacomo Giuntoli (lecturer at IPSAR Matteotti di Pisa), a former advisee, performed the interview with Prof. Dr. Maria Giovanna Arcamone (Università di Pisa – UNIPI), a well-known investigator throughout Europe. Although retired, she still undertakes several tasks and is remembered for organizing the unforgettable ICOS Congress in Pisa (2005), as well as for her current activity in various agencies linked to onomastic studies.

Recalling her long academic career, Arcamone considers her works in Onomastics and Toponomastics, especially in Italian literary onomastics and Italian toponymy in general, specifically for Lombardy and Tuscany. The researcher offers striking and remarkable examples of names analyzed throughout her career, where many of them are references for Italian toponymy studies. She also outlines the current Onomastics and Toponomastics in Europe and supplies useful information for beginner researchers.

As requested by the organizers, both interviewees reflect on specific aspects of Brazilian toponymy. In this sense, Prof. d'Encarnação ponders about the name Brazil and Prof. Arcamone lists the Italian names transferred to cities in the Southern region of Brazil in order to honor Italian cities, according to the own professor's findings in field studies from previous years.

## **Final words**

There is not much left to say. We have already successfully and extensively fulfilled the scope of this editorial. We only wish that, as far as possible, this issue may contribute for insights, clarifications, and, most importantly, spreading a good science. May tradition and innovation – if reasonably balanced – guide our steps. After this warm-up and stretching time, we leave the reader free to take one last leap and dive full of breath into the articles and interviews here. Now let's hand over to the authors.

We wish you all a pleasant reading.

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