



THE FORMATION OF THE FRANKISH PERIOD AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE FIELD OF ONOMASTICS

Vafa Seyidⁱ

PhD in Philology,

Associate Professor,

Azerbaijan University of Languages,

Azerbaijan

Abstract:

This article is based on the linguistic study of the formation of the Frankish and its influence on the field of onomastics. The article highlights the opinions of historical researchers about the gradual formation of the Frankish period since ancient times, and sometimes these opinions create polemics between them. At the same time, it is said that throughout history, various tribes gathered in the territory of the Frankish empire and created a state and language, and these tribes' languages influenced on the field of onomastics. The article also reflects the presence of mythical considerations in the field of onomastics, the inclusion of an important lexicon in the field of toponymy as a result of the German occupation, as well as in the vocabulary of Gallo-Romance. It is noticeable that the names were formed by the bithematic and monothematic method by adding the suffixes -IÄCU, -VILLE and -CURT, and then the suffix -COURT on a chronological scale. The article provides information about the areas where the tribes settled within the empire and the necropolises, as well as the falsified place names created on the basis of hypocoristic (hypocritical) names around these necropolises through maps. The article concludes that, according to the new methodology of contact linguistics, all the toponyms included in the study are indeed Romanic formations, contrary to the widespread opinion that still tries to interpret them as Germanic derivatives. Thanks to archeology, it can be proven that the monothematic and hypocoristic variants of Frankish anthroponyms, which appeared as "small names" among the Franks and took on an "informal" character, were not used by the Roman population to create toponyms.

Keywords: toponym, bithematic, monothematic, subjugate, ethnogenesis, core of traditions

ⁱ Correspondence: email vafaseidova@mail.ru

1. Introduction

The Frankish kingdoms are the various barbarian kingdoms which succeeded or coexisted in Western Europe during the High Middle Ages after the decline of the Western Roman Empire and the conquest of these territories by the Franks during the 5th century.

The Franks are one of the Germanic peoples settled on the right bank of the Rhine, outside the borders of the Roman Empire. From 256-257, they took part in the great invasion and entered the Empire to plunder. They later took part in many other raids.

First settled between the Rhine and the Ardennes as Lètes, the Franks gradually spread over the territory of the former Belgian Gaul. They gradually separated into two groups, the Salian Franks and the Rhenish Franks, in the north of Belgian Gaul, on either side of the Rhine.

The Salian Franks then regrouped into a single kingdom and were governed by Theodomir, killed around 420 by the Romans, then by Clodion le Chevelu. Taking advantage of the withdrawal of Roman troops from Gaul, he led his people south and seized Tournai and its region. However, they are prevented and beaten by Ætius, who grants them a foedus (the Salian Franks become a federated people of Rome), allowing them to settle around Tournai (Belgium). Several kings succeeded one another there, until Clovis, who became king in 481.

The migration of the Salian Franks, then the foedus granted to them, had the effect of isolating the Rhenish Franks, who found themselves alone against the Alamanni. Between 431 and 469, they regrouped in a single kingdom and negotiated an alliance with the Burgundian kingdom.

These kingdoms, together forming an entity called the Kingdom of the Franks (in Latin: Regnum Francorum), sometimes unified, lasted throughout the High Middle Ages, from the 5th to the 9th century.

2. The formation of the Frankish period

The period of European history that began after the fall of the Western Roman Empire lasted almost six centuries, from about 476 to 1100. In the early Middle Ages, the Great Migration took place. The Viking tribes began to appear in these areas: the Ostrogothic kingdoms in Italy, the Visigoths in Aquitaine and the Iberian Peninsula, and the Frankish state, which occupied most of Western Europe, were created. North Africa and Spain became part of the Arab caliphate, and many small Angle, Saxon and Celtic states in the British Isles, etc., are formed.

Most historians recognize Childeric, the son of the legendary Merovingian dynasty, as the first historical leader of the Salic Franks. It was during his time that the future territory of the Frankish kingdom began to expand.

The Merovingians settled in the former Roman provinces of Gaul, united into one state. In 496, shortly after the victory over the Alemanni, Childeric's son Clovis I converted to Christianity and became the founder of the Frankish kingdom, which

became the most powerful state in Western Europe for three centuries. By the end of his reign, Clovis had subjugated almost all of Gaul, including the neighboring Frankish tribes along the Rhine, and incorporated their lands into his kingdom. He also incorporated the various Roman garrisons scattered throughout Gaul into his own state. This is how the first period of the history of the Frankish state, which covers the period from the end of the 5th century to the end of the 7th century and is usually called the Merovingian period, began. During the reign of Clovis, Aquitaine was invaded (507), and during the reign of his successors, Burgundy was occupied (534); the Ostrogoths gave up Provence in favor of the Franks (536).

By the middle of the 6th century, the Frankish state covered almost the entire territory of the former Roman province of Gaul. [8].

2.1 Onomastics during the Frankish period

In the field of Frankish onomastics, anthroponymy can serve as an auxiliary tool supporting the thesis of ethnogenesis. Because we can see that Germanic names have multiplied since the middle of the 6th century, and at least in the north of the Loire, they have supplanted the old Gallo-Roman names. To find a solution to the problem, the Austrian school of history developed the theory of "ethnogenesis" in the 1960s and 1970s. According to this school, at the beginning of the history of any nation, the sense of ethnicity belongs only to a small number of people. This small clan is called the "Franks" and has a "core of traditions" that acts as a support for the community. This cultural stock consists of language, religion, origin, legal customs and rituals of power, including recognition of the privileged family from which kings are chosen. Historically, the theory of ethnogenesis is undoubtedly a product of its time. It emerged in the 1960s, when Europe experienced both a critique of the nation-state model and the mass integration of immigrant populations through rapid acculturation. Thus, it can be considered that the Franks of the 6th century consisted of a collection of "native Franks" who embodied their dominant model, and "immigrant Franks" who gradually adhered to it by bringing their own traditions.

At that time, could religious beliefs have been a factor of better unification of these two peoples? For the Romans, who became massively Christian in the 4th century, the Franks were considered pagan for a long time. However, there is no record of the local nobles converting to the pagan faith of the barbarian kings. On the contrary, we find that the Franks were baptized from the middle of the fifth century, and this process was further developed after the baptism of Clovis between 496 and 508. Consequently, it is unlikely that the belief in pagan gods could serve as an effective basis for the formation of the Frankish people. Clearly, even apart from any religious belief, one can imagine that the Franks had common sense and a destiny protected by Providence (God's wiser management of His creatures). Herwig Wolfram, the great theorist of ethnogenesis, believed that a group that carries the "core of traditions" of a nation preserves the ancestral memory of that nation, which was passed down in the form of oral narratives before being written down.

There are deep-rooted myths among the Franks, and these myths are, in fact, related to the royal dynasty. Around 660, the Frederic Chronicle states that the Franks were descended from a group of heroes of the Trojan War and that their sovereign was born from the union of a prince and a sea monster. Unfortunately, recent research by Magali Kumert proves beyond dispute that these wonderful origin stories are not ancient oral legends, but scientific constructions that date only to the 7th century at best. As far as we know, the Franks of Clovis' time had no myth to prove their identity.

However, there are serious problems in defining a people with a material culture. Thus, the *angona*, which the Byzantines designated as the "national" weapon of the Franks, is found only in the tombs of the chieftains in the 6th century: should we conclude that only representatives of the warrior elite were considered true Franks? Moreover, craft techniques were less "ethnic" than is often claimed. The style of dress of the Franks spread like a fashion, and the weapons they used were quickly adopted by other people. Thus, the Anglo-Saxons of the 7th century had a significant number of common features with the material civilization of the Merovingians. However, it cannot be considered correct to conclude that they were Franks.

Frankish materialism culture characterized by high-quality products was perhaps one of the main reasons for the strength of the Merovingian kingdom for that time. It should be noted that King Childeric, who died in 482, was the first person in Gaul to wear colorful jewelry. These became one of the symbols of the Frankish elite during the reign of his son Clovis. [9]

The Franks, who linguistically quickly assimilated, soon began to speak the Romance language and call their estates by names composed of new compounds. In these compounds, the word order and, in general, the name of the owner of the mansion corresponded to the Germanic language, the common name court (*cour* - as an equivalent of the word "*yard*"), and the names of the courtyard or city and suburbs corresponded to the Gallo-Roman language:

Names such as Jermonville Jermond's "*villa*", Hattoncourt Hatton's "*courtyard (palace)*" were formed in this way. Names formed in this form were more common in the northern part of France.

The Vikings who conquered Calvados and the Co country in the north of Erin also used this form of designation; but later they added the second element *-bec* (river), *-beuf* (budh -huddle, substitute for hut), *-dalla* (toft - hut), etc. they switched to a pure Old Norse style of expression. The first part of the names was derived from a geographical or human name: Bouquetot "peanut hut", Criquebeuf "church hut", Robertot "Rober".

The state of Armorica, with very few Gallic names (not a single word remained in the province of Finisterre), was invaded by the Celtic tribes of Great Britain around the 6th century. Almost all toponymic names were taken from the British language. Compound names, denoting any canton (place) whose second element is always a human name (mainly the names of saints), were more distinguished: the words *Plou*, *Pleu*, *Plé*, and their parts *Tref*, *Tré*, from which the parish churches or ecclesiastical parishes were called, came from Old Latin, and *plebs* and *tribus* from Great Britain during the Roman occupation.

The Basque tribes who came from Spain occupied the area between the Po and the Pyrenees at that time, and most of the names of the places here are derived from the Basque language. [10]

At the beginning of the Merovingian period, all people of Frankish origin who came to settle in Gaul generally had to bear a bithematic "official" names, with shortened versions of these names. How the Gallo-Romans who came into contact with the Germanic population adapted to this anthroponymic system far from their personal experience has not been investigated in any way during onomastic studies, since, as far as we know, there are no written sources on the subject. Could they understand the development function of Frankish anthroponymy? Could they make any choice, and at that time, what place was given to monothematic names and these magnificent "little names" used among the Franks?

In order to be able to answer such questions, we must first remember that in any case of contact between languages, the several linguistic varieties involved in this contact seem to favor mainly models or forms with meaning carriers. This "double" interpretation of anthroponyms seems to be a very suitable indicator for the isolation of the *-IÄCU*-containing names from the large mass of names confirmed in the land of Gaul, indicating the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages. Many Gigny-rooted toponyms registered in northern Gaul seem symbolic to us. Nevertheless, the origin of this word is confirmed to be *GENNIÄCU*. For Later Antiquity, the anthroponym Gennius is well-attested, but the forms Gennus, Gennius, and Genno were also very common in Merovingian Gaul, but they were not always considered to be of Germanic origin, contrary to what earlier studies have sometimes claimed. However, the existence of the variant Gainus [2, s. 97], which the Germanists created from the German name "Gagin", cannot be denied, nor can it be explained by a simple graphic error. It seems that the similarity between the two anthroponymic bases, one Gaulish and the other Germanic, undoubtedly contributed to the promotion of this theme. [2, p. 103]. More or less similar examples can be given to such names. However, it is impossible to be sure of that; for this reason, following the principle of old etymological research, the first element of the suffix due to its Gallo-Roman character, when this assumption is not faced with great difficulties, in all cases, it is necessary to accept it as Gallo-Roman, and it is necessary to always remember that the same principle cannot be applied on the chronological scale to *-IÄCU*, and then to place names formed with *-VILLE* and *-CURT*.

The gradual transition from the Gallo-Roman anthroponymic system to the "Germanic" system may have occurred through selection mechanisms of which few is known to us at present. In this context, probably before Germanic anthroponyms prevailed, names of two types of Gallo-Roman origin were particularly privileged for that period. It is necessary to know:

- 1) Names in ancient Latin, Celtic, Greek, or other languages were based on Christian traditions and could, therefore, serve as a regulator to prevent the "barbarization" of Frankish-ruled society. We think that these names were especially frequent in densely populated regions in ancient times and were characterized by strong Romanic continuity.

2) Names had phonetic, morphological or semantic patterns in both languages, especially including certain Celtic elements. In 2008, no. 49 -50 of the *first Nouvelle Revue d'Onomastique* (New Journal of Onomastics) noted the innovation that emerged under the influence of Germanic superstrates: Gallo-Romance actors used special methods that facilitated adaptation and integration through their language. It is only at a later stage that hybrid names appear concretely realizing this effect. Later, numerous complex combinations of only Germanic elements arose, named by increasingly large sections of the Romance population. (*The typology of these hybrid formations was proposed by HAUBRICHS (2004)* («Romano-germanische Hybridnamen des frühen Mittelalters nördlich der Alpen»). In: /c/. /HÄGERMANN, Dieter/JARNUT, Jörg (dir.). *Akkulturation. Probleme einer germanisch-romanischen Kultursynthese in Spätantike und frühem Mittelalter*. Berlin/New York : de Gruyter, 2004, p. 179-203.) and *KREMER (2008)* (KREMER Dieter. « Germanisch-romanische oder romanisch-germanische Hybridnamen ? ». In : GREULE, Albrecht et al. (dir.). *Studien zu Literatur, Sprache und Geschichte in Europa. Wolfgang Haubrichs zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet*. St. Ingbert : Röhrig, 2008, p. 345-374.). *All the variants were mixed, and the resulting forms were attested in the southern part of Gallomania, and especially in Aquitaine, from the 6th century onwards, before spreading to the regions further north in the 7th and 8th centuries.*)

This process is again characterized by strong regional differences. Thus, for example, in regions with strong Romance language continuity, such as around major Romano-Christian centers like Metz or Oser (PITZ 2004, 2006), the particle -IÄCU was found more frequently within anthroponyms, mostly from the Gallo-Romanesque period. If we include all toponyms containing -VILLA and -CURTIS and names of this type containing -IÄCU, the first element of which are human names, into a single corpus, by systematically isolating the anthroponyms in them, it is certainly possible to find anthroponyms of Roman and Germanic etymology. However, a certain number of anthroponyms can be found among them, which may have both Roman and Germanic roots.

Therefore, the toponyms of this period are divided into four categories:

- toponyms based on the bithematic Germanic anthroponyms;
- toponyms based on monothematic Germanic anthroponyms;
- toponyms based on Germanic anthroponyms of the hypocoristic type, clearly distinguishing the derivatives formed with Germanic suffixes from the derivatives formed with suffixes of Roman origin (-ULUS, -ELLUS, etc.) or hybrid suffixes (-LENUS, etc.);
- toponyms based on Gallo-Roman anthroponyms (only for the particles *-ville* and *-court*).

Thus, the overlapping of archaeological and onomastic data gives the following image:

1) The names of the oldest necropolises established since the 6th century are Roman and even pre-Roman in origin. Nevertheless, the toponyms based on Germanic names of the bitematic type also originated from the method of a denomination that appeared in

the 6th century, because the period of their spread coincides with the period of the creation of the oldest necropolises in the centers of microdistricts.

2) As a rule, Germanic personal names of the monothematic type did not participate in the formation of Gallo-Roman place names after the 7th century. In various micro-regions, they are represented on the periphery of stronger population centers and always correspond to "internal" colonization.

3) It is also clear that the formations containing hypocoristic personal names are more recent, as they are rarely associated with the Merovingian necropolis. In the rare cases where a necropolis can be attributed to a name appropriate to this mode of formation, these are later sites dating back to the period when the decline of "ranked cemeteries" began. The vast majority of these toponyms belong to the period when there was no custom of burying the dead outside mausoleums and providing their graves with funerary furniture. Therefore, these settlements can be attributed to the end of the 7th and 8th centuries.

Onomastically, the underrepresentation of bithematic personal names in IÄCU toponyms (These results will certainly be different as we expect a very interesting chronological difference for Picardy, Ile de France or south of Champaign) consisting of Germanic personal names and the underrepresentation of this type among cemetery names is also surprising, since, as we have seen above, these formations were considered the oldest Merovingian layer in the Roman zone. Therefore, everything suggests that during the Merovingian period, the suffix -IÄCU underwent a change of function as a result of the development of large land structures: thus, by the end of the Merovingian era, the suffix was no longer used to designate a settlement, but to refer to the territory belonging to that settlement. In the charters of the abbey of Gorze, it is stated that the old name -IÄCU, consisting of a Germanic personal name, was later changed or used as a variant of the name -VILLE or -COURT, formed from the same anthroponym, and eventually adopted: *Aucunville* near Gorze is mentioned as in 745 *in fine Aconiaca*, in 868 *in Aconis villa ... as in fine Aconiaca*. *Boncourt* near *Conflans* as the beautiful *Bavoniaga vel in ipsa villa Bavono* in 815; *Donkourt-lès Conflan* in 815 as the beautiful *Dudoniaga*, in 886 as *Dudonis curtis*; *Hannonville* near *Conflan* in 774 as *in Hununega fine vel in ipsa villa que vocatur Hunone villa*, etc. had been confirmed. [1, p.9]. In all these cases, they are toponyms based on monothematic anthroponyms. [3. pp. 83-114].

3. Conclusion

Our observations help to clarify our general understanding of the cultural changes of this important period, with changes in the naming of individuals providing us with relevant information, such as changes affecting dress customs or funerals, as well as the expression of feelings of "identity". Thus, the greater representation of hypocoristic names from the Carolingian period corresponds to the general trend observed in written sources. But with the archeological researches, due to the small space that is the object of this study, this event could be more accurately evaluated in its chronological dimension and related to more general social and cultural evolutions. Thanks to this scientific

collaboration, the researchers in the field of onomastics will now be able to build their linguistic conclusions on a firmer foundation.

It should be noted that, according to the new methodology of contact linguistics, all the place names included in our study are really Roman formations, contrary to the widespread opinion that still tries to interpret them as Germanic derivatives. [4, p. 95-106]. [5, p. 421-449]. This observation in no way implies that there could not have been individuals of Frankish origin among the inhabitants of the respective areas, and that no form of bilingualism, whatever its precise extent, existed. In fact, it seems not so impossible that most of the toponyms used a French doublet among the Frankish populations living in these regions; studies within the immediate contours of the present boundary of the languages clearly show that the formation of doublets was common for that period. [6, p. 255-288]. However, it should be noted that during the Romanization of the Franks in the Roman lands, these Frankish forms definitely disappeared, and from an epistemological point of view, nothing allows us to prove their remote existence unless they are clearly confirmed by written sources. [7, p. 341-370]. On the other hand, the true Romanic formations that existed after the return to monolingualism of the former bilingual zones and are the subject of our study, allow us to learn a little more about the processes of assimilation of Germanic anthroponyms by the local population. Thanks to archeology, it can be proven that the monothematic and hypocoristic variants of Frankish anthroponyms, which appeared as "small names" among the Franks and took on an "informal" character, were not used by the Roman population to create toponyms. Therefore, it can be concluded that in the first stages of contact between the two language communities, these Roman populations had a very good understanding of the mechanisms governing the anthroponymic system of the Franks. They realized that the use of hypocoristic names in the anthroponymic system of their Frankish neighbors differed sharply from the use of bithematic names in contrast to the rules governing their own system, for example, an anthroponym like Maurinus was certainly not used as a "little name", but referred to a person whose "real" name was Maurus. Thus, it started from different groups, related only to the bithematic names and undoubtedly to the direct contact with their "theodicy" neighbors (related to the code of the Roman emperor Theodosius II in the 5th century), and then spread to other population groups. It was a case of cultural adaptation born of concrete necessity. The adoption of monothematic names of Germanic origin by the Gallo-Roman populations would eventually continue until the 7th century, when some male names of Gallo-Roman origin could not be clearly and cleanly distinguished from female names. *Maximus* and *Maxima* later became *Maxim*, *Leontius* and *Leontia Leonce*, *(A)egidius* and *(A)egidia Gile*, *Eustachius* and *Eustachio Eustache*, etc. due to the lack of pronunciation of final vowels in Proto-French (Primitive French). In a situation no doubt very embarrassing for the Roman population of northern Galloromania, who were in regular contact with the traditions and very "warlike" lifestyle of the Frankish leaders, this meant resorting to forms ending in hypocoristic -o and -io (Felicio, Paulo, Leo, Urso, etc.). Many similar names of Frankish origin (Hugo, Bruno, Bero, Audo, etc.) also arose this way and saved the Gallo-Romance population from this shame, as most of these names ended in *-ōne* or *-âne* and were clearly varied by gender.

These observations not only lead us to be interested in the degree of bilingualism associated with these Roman populations; they also address the very delicate problem of the historical morphology of French, i.e. *ber* / *baron*, *compaing* / *compagnon*, *nonain* or *ante* / *antain* personal designations, as well as they allow a new look at the hypothesis of the influence of the Old Frankish language on the inflectional genesis of anthroponyms such as *Pierre* / *Perron*, *Hugues* / *Huon*, *Charles* / *Charlon*, *Eve* / *Even*, etc.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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