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THE FOLK IMAGE OF A HUMAN PRESERVED IN THE DIALECTAL PLANT NAMES. AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUES¹

KEYWORDS: dialectology, ethnolinguistics, linguistic worldview, image of a human, names of plants, dialect of Podhale region.

ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to present the folk image of a human based on the plant names used by Gorals from the north-west part of the Podhale region. The material was gathered through informal interviews with inhabitants of nine villages conducted between 2016 and 2017. The first part of the text includes a detailed account of the methodological approach employed. Additionally, the research problems arising from the specificity of the collected material are presented. The second part of the article discusses the features of the rural society which are indirectly preserved in the folk names of plants, e.g. anthropocentrism, aristocracy, a binary view of reality, sensory perception of the world, instrumental rationality, attachment to Catholicism, magical beliefs.

1. THE INTRODUCTION

As Ryszard Tokarski (1993: 335) asserts, vocabulary is a reflection of an individual's intellectual and emotional stance towards the non-linguistic reality, encompassing objects and human activities within the material world. By analysing the lexis, insights can therefore be gained into the cultural community in question and its modes of perceiving and categorising the world. This assumption serves as the foundation for the present

¹ The article presents the issues raised by the author in her book (Kulak 2022) to the non-Polish-speaking academic community.

article, which is situated on the borderline between ethnolinguistics² (due to the aim and methodology of the research) and dialectology (due to the type of material and the manner in which it was gathered).

The objective of this article consists in reconstructing the folk image of the human, indirectly preserved in the plant names collected from several villages in north-western Podhale. The term 'folk image of man' is used to describe a set of traits, behaviours and values³ (such as concreteness, practicality and religiosity) that are typical of the simple man, the bearer of folk (traditional) culture. These characteristics have been shaped by successive generations and are perpetuated in language. This approach does not restrict the analysis of the collected names to the reconstruction of the image of rural inhabitants (in the administrative sense), although they obviously constitute the most important representatives of the aforementioned cultural type. It should be emphasised that the majority of Poles settled in cities have a peasant background, and they too are participants in folk culture. Furthermore, the increasing globalisation of society is blurring the distinction between the language and culture of urban and rural communities.

The research was conducted in nine villages inhabited by Gorals from the region of Rabka⁴. The villages in question belong to three communes: Raba Wyżna (comprising Bielanka, Raba Wyżna, Rokiciny, Sieniawa and Skawa), Rabka-Zdrój (comprising Chabówka, Ponice and Rdzawka) and Spytkowice (which comprises a single village, Spytkowice). These are located in the south-western part of Lesser Poland, in the north of the Nowy Targ district. The inhabitants of the above-mentioned villages communicate in the varied dialect of the Podhale region. A number of phonological inconsistencies can be observed in the speech of both older and younger generations. These can be attributed to the influence of the standard Polish language on dialects. The differentiation of the language spoken in the

² The objective of ethnolinguistic research is to identify and delineate the characteristics of a given community's identity. To achieve this, the concept of the linguistic world picture is employed (Bartmiński, Chlebda 2008: 11–12). Further insights into the linguistic image of the world can be found, for example, in the works of Adam Głaz (2022) or Anna Pajdzińska (2019).

³ The components of the human image are determined through an analysis of the naming process. This concept will be elaborated upon in the following text.

⁴ In the mid-19th century, the Polish poet and geographer Wincenty Pol (1851: 122) made reference to the so-called 'Gorals from Rabka' (Polish 'Górale od Rabki' or 'Rabczanie'), named after the Raba river. They are a population living in the lower part of Podhale (north-east of the region).

region is primarily determined by a generational factor. The older generation employs a dialect, whereas the younger generation utilises a code that is characteristic of an urban cultural milieu.

In the period between 2016 and 2017, 647 plant names were collected through informal interviews with a total of more than 100 villagers, who were able to recall the names and associate them with the relevant objects. These names refer to more than 260 species of plants. The data includes the names of herbaceous plants (e.g. weeds, herbs, grasses) and woody plants (e.g. trees, shrubs), both wild and cultivated. It is of particular importance to note that only those names for which the motivation was known to the informants were considered for inclusion in the research material. A full collection of dialectal plant lexis from the north-west Podhale region would unquestionably constitute a valuable and significant contribution to the field of linguistics; however, it would require further years of research. It can be reasonably assumed that the collection would probably number at least 2,000 units, as in Halina Pelcowa's dictionary (2017), which includes both motivated and non-motivated units (from the point of view of the dialect user, of course). Such volume of material would considerably slow down the achievement of the intended aim of the work, which is to show that the naming of designators can be a source of knowledge about the characteristics of a community. It should be added that, due to the chosen aim of the work, the informants were not asked about their understanding of the given names, and cognitive definitions in accordance with the methodology employed in *the Dictionary of Stereotypes and Folk Symbols* (SSSL 1996–2022) were not created. The article concentrates on the image of the human reflected in plant names rather than on the images of the plants themselves. A comprehensive description of the images of individual plants would require a separate investigation.

The linguistic material was not restricted to differential vocabulary alone. Both general dialect expressions and lexis common to many varieties of Polish were noted, which also functions in the speech of the villagers and reflects their experiences (Pelcowa 2017: 14; Kąś 2011: 13). However, the combination of these two groups of plant vocabulary showed that in the research material, there appeared phytonyms derived from diverse linguistic sources: items created within the dialect, borrowings, calques, names inherited from the Proto-Slavic era and those with Proto-Indo-European roots (Waniakowa 2012: 139–187). As is well known, the process of nom-

inating most of these names occurred centuries or even millennia earlier, sometimes in a different linguistic area, based on the perceived characteristics of the plants at the time. Contemporary villagers are re-discovering the motivation of phytonyms in accordance with the prevailing beliefs and superstitions of their community, as well as their general knowledge and certain laws of nature (Waniakowa 2012: 115–116).

2. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The etymology of plant names that are used by the inhabitants of a particular area gives rise to a number of methodological issues. Polish ethnolinguists agree that the analysis of dialect plant names can lead to the reconstruction of a rural community's worldview. This view is shared by Halina Pelcowa (2002: 140) and Halina Kurek (2004a: 129), among others. Nevertheless, it is common knowledge that a considerable number of dialect plant names did not originate in rural settings. Thus, folk botanical names do not always reflect the worldview of a particular community. Jadwiga Waniakowa (2006: 493) suggests that the primary assignment of the linguist should be to differentiate between the native names that have emerged within a given rural area and those that have been adopted or preserved since the time of Old Polish. The aforementioned researcher asserts that Polish dialectological literature on folk phytonyms erroneously implies these names originated in the Polish dialect. The authors typically regard dialect lexemes pertaining to plants as illustrative of the villagers' creative linguistic output. However, this interpretation does not align fully with reality (Waniakowa 2006: 503).

The differentiation of authentic dialect plant names from other units (e.g. loanwords or calques), as proposed by Jadwiga Waniakowa, would necessitate extensive and meticulous etymological investigation, the outcomes of which would exceed the scope of a single scientific study. Even if it were feasible to segregate the vocabulary developed in Polish dialect from the full botanical lexis used in the discourse of the inhabitants of an area, for example from a dozen villages or from a region, the resulting lexical corpus would likely be inadequate for the purpose of discovering regularities that would enable the reconstruction of the naming subject – the rural community. A more comprehensive collection of authentic dialect names from the entire Polish language area, or alternatively from one of

the macro-regions, could potentially serve as the basis for reconstructing an image of the world or a community. However, as previously stated, this assignment appears to be extremely difficult to implement. Moreover, it is uncertain whether the extracted linguistic material would be sufficiently diverse to enable the reconstruction of a complete and unadulterated image of the villagers.

A researcher who wishes to present a picture of a rural community based on folk phytonyms is, to some extent, obliged to consider the entire range of plant vocabulary in use among the inhabitants of the selected area. In this instance, the utilisation of an ethnolinguistic methodology is useful, as it enables the analysis of the gathered material from a synchronic standpoint, without delving into the evolution of the names in question. The recorded vocabulary shall be treated as a unified entity, which is subjected to analysis with the aim of reaching conclusions about the conceptualisation of the world of a given linguistic and cultural community. In conducting this analysis, consideration is accorded to the folk etymology of each name rather than the scientific etymology. The reconstruction of the image of a human based on the phytonyms collected in the selected region is possible by the assumption of the universality of folk culture and the same mentality of the whole rural community (SSSL 1996, vol 1, no. 1: 19). Furthermore, it should be emphasised that the plant names that are going out of use provide valuable information on the earlier state of Polish dialects (Wierzbicka 2002: 52).

An analysis of folk botanical lexis does not preclude the emergence of elements that are characteristic of a Polish, Slavic or even European community in the reconstructed image. It is evident members of rural micro-communities are part of the general public. The vocabulary in question implies “a range of ways of seeing that are intrinsic to different cultures and different historical periods”⁵ (Bartmiński 1989: 49). Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to equate the image of the villagers with that of the general community from our cultural circle. In order to reproduce this latter image, a comparative analysis would be necessary. Only “the study of the linguistic images of the world of different communicative communities enables us to reach similarities and differences in the conceptualisation of the world” (Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2013: 270). These similarities represent the manner in which the reality of one macro-community is perceived and valued.

⁵ Own translation (here and in the following locations).

The response to the question of which conceptualisation of reality is perpetuated by plant names is contingent upon the research concept adopted. Etymologists will rather try to recreate the image of a human in general. The deployment of ethnolinguistic tools to analyse the phytonyms collected in the selected area should, conversely, facilitate the reconstruction of a picture of a given cultural community. Consequently, for example, terms that functioned in the language of the Rabka highlanders could be employed to illustrate the image of the villagers. However, in light of the aforementioned considerations, it can be acknowledged that the phytonyms perpetuate a folk image of a human. The term *folk* is indeed associated with traditional rural culture, but its connotations extend beyond this context. This word encompasses both the old and the new, i.e. that created by past and present generations (as opposed to the adjective *rural*, which has a narrower meaning). The adoption of such an assumption is due to the specific type of material that phytonyms are, most of which did not originate on Polish dialect ground and, above all, have not done so today. The significant stock of plant vocabulary used by contemporary villagers is made up of pre-Slavic lexical elements, created centuries ago and subject to change.

3. THE DIVISION OF COLLECTED PLANT NAMES AS A FOUNDATION FOR ANALYSIS

In research on the reconstruction of the folk image of a human on the basis of plant names, an important issue also relates to the way in which lexical units are grouped. This grouping is, of course, done in order to discover regularities at the level of semantic-cultural motivation. For behind acts of linguistic nomination lie processes of ordering or “taming” the world by a given community, as Ryszard Tokarski (2012: 249) writes.

As a way of dividing up the majority of the lexicon (i.e. the names motivated by the characteristics of the objects and by utility), experiential categories (Polish *kategorie doświadczalne*) were adopted. Małgorzata Brzozowska defines them as “categories that appear in the conceptual system of a given culture and are determined by the experiences of their bearers” (Brzozowska 2000: 144–145). They can be used to analyse onomasiological (associative) derivatives, which are formed “on the basis of features experienced and considered relevant in the cognitive act” (Brzozowska 2000: 144). In contrast to semantic derivatives, onomasiological derivatives

represent a naming mechanism based on the use of features that are not necessarily salient but are perceptually dominant at the moment of naming. As a result, the meaning of the base is not contained in the lexical meaning of the derivative but enters into the socially stabilised associative relationship felt by the speakers and thus indicates the feature that the speakers associate with the meaning of the derivative (Brzozowska 2000: 143).

These formations are generally regarded as semantically irregular and non-categorized, but Małgorzata Brzozowska's analysis of the names of mushrooms, butterflies and months has disputed this. Even in these cases, it is relatively easy to distinguish derived types (cf. Brzozowska 2000: 143, 149).

The material also includes names whose onomasiological basis is based on folk magic beliefs, religious beliefs and cultural associations, justified by real plant characteristics. Such phytonyms were subordinated to cultural categories⁶.

The collected plant names were assigned to dozens of experiential and cultural categories⁷, such as shape, colour, taste, medicinal properties or magic. In some of them, subcategories were distinguished in order to introducing additional internal distinctions (e.g. flower colour, fruit and seed colour, leaf colour). This was dictated by the specificity and the number of units collected.

The categories were divided into four overarching groups, namely: (1) features identifying a referent, (2) time and place of plant occurrence, (3) usefulness and uselessness of plants and (4) cultural references and associations⁸. As can be seen, the first three groups included experiential categories and the last group included cultural categories. The deciding factor in assigning a category to these four groups was the motivation of names. For example, categories such as colour, shape or features perceived by touch are included in the first group (features identifying a referent) because they contain names created by the language user from a limited, narrow point of view, focusing only on the features of the nominated object (cf. phytonyms motivated by appearance, taste, smell). The second group (time and place of occurrence of plants) was formed for plant names referring to the time of flowering, sowing, odour secretion and the place

⁶ The term *cultural categories* is analogous to the term *experiential categories*.

⁷ A similar distinction appears in the article by Stanisława Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska (2010). The researcher wrote about the experiential and cultural motivations of plant names.

⁸ The proposed typology is consistent with the divisions used by other researchers (e.g. Pelcowa 2002).

of occurrence or origin. At the time of their creation, the nominator took a broad view, encompassing the referent as well as the surrounding world. The third group included names indicating the usefulness of a species (e.g. its medicinal properties) and uselessness (e.g. poisonous, intoxicating and irritating properties). Therefore, this collection brings together phytonyms whose structure perpetuates a positive or negative impact on a human life and its environment. The last group consists of names referring to magic, religion, beliefs, as well as units formed by association.

The division of phytonyms provided the framework for the analysis, which proceeded from names motivated by appearance and properties, to the place and time of occurrence and the manner in which plants are used, to phytonyms related to the culture of the traditional community⁹. Thus, it can be said that the analysis proceeded from the “microscopic view” (Polish *mikrospojrzenie*), i.e. from the superficial, the concrete, the objective, the most easily perceived, to the intangible values and the relationship that occurs between a referent and a human. Moreover, the extracted sets illustrate three discrete viewpoints: perceptual (groups: features identifying a referent, time and place of plant), functional (group: usefulness and uselessness of plants) and cultural (group: cultural references and associations).

As with the semantic fields, the problem of the fluidity of the boundaries between different experiential and cultural categories could not be avoided. The greatest difficulties arose with multi-particle names, whose structure perpetuates more than one piece of information. For example, consider the case of the name *borówka czarna*¹⁰ [black berry]¹¹ ‘*Vaccinium myrtillus*’¹². The name provides information regarding the black colour of the fruit (*czarny*)¹³ and occurrence of the plant in the forest (*bór* → *borówka*). The name *koniczyna biała* [white clover] ‘*Trifolium repens*’, on the other hand, refers to the white flowers (*biała*) and the practical use by animals – mainly by horses (*koń* → *koniczyna*). It was of necessity to include such phyt-

⁹ A detailed analysis is presented in another paper by the author. Bibliographic details will be provided upon receipt of a review of the article.

¹⁰ The original plant names have been spelled in accordance with standard Polish orthography, without consideration of dialect features, in order to facilitate comprehension of the article.

¹¹ A literal English translation of the original name is given in square brackets. In the event that the name is challenging to translate, a succinct folk etymological clue is provided. The author presents detailed motivations in another study (Kulak 2022).

¹² The Latin name of the plant species is provided in single quotation marks.

¹³ The etymology of the name is provided in parentheses.

onyms in a variety of categories. A name was also attributed to disparate categories when its motivations were different, as informants claimed. For example, the name *krakowiak* [something like resident of Cracow] ‘*Pelargonium zonale*’ was justified by the colour of the flowers, such as in the Cracow folk costume, but also by its origin in the Cracow area.

4. THE ELEMENTS OF THE FOLK IMAGE OF A HUMAN

The analysis of collected phytonyms, which aimed to discover regularities in the naming of plants, enabled the isolation of a dozen traits, behaviours or values that collectively form the folk image of a human. The most notable elements, i.e. the most strongly established in botanical lexis, are considered to be: anthropocentrism, anthropomorphism, aristocratism, the black and white valuing of reality, sensual perception of the world, the instrumental type of rationality, concreteness, practicality, attachment to the Catholic religion and belief in magic.

The anthropocentric perspective is revealed in phytonyms, predominantly through allusions to a human or a human body, e.g. *panienka* [maiden] ‘*Phlox paniculata*’, *sierotka* [little orphan] ‘*Bellis perennis*’, *modre oczka* [intensive blue, little eyes] ‘*Myosotis palustris* or *Myosotis sylvatica*’, *język teściowej* [mother-in-law’s tongue] ‘*Sansevieria trifasciata*’. The human-centric view is also exemplified by names that refer to illnesses or ailments, as well as those that reflect human existential needs, both fundamental (e.g. food) and higher-order, such as the desire for well-being, health, love and a sense of security. Cf. *anginka* [little angina] ‘*Pelargonium graveolens*’, *bieguniec* [< *biegunka*, English *diarrhea*] ‘*Ailanthus altissima*’, *olejnik* [< *olej*, English *oil*] ‘*Ricinus communis*’, *kielbaśnik* [< *kielbasa*, English *sausage*] ‘*Origanum majorana*’, *miłosne ziele* [love herb] ‘*Levisticum officinale*’, *drzewko szczęścia* [tree of happiness] ‘*Crassula ovata*’, *grzmotnik* [< *grzmot*, English *thunder*] ‘*Alchemilla pastoralis*’. Anthropocentrism is further evidenced by phytonyms to indicate plant harmfulness or unsuitableness, e.g. *parzenica* [sth that burns] ‘*Urtica dioica*’, *trujaki* [sth that poisons] ‘*Digitalis purpurea* or *Digitalis grandiflora*’.

A specific form of anthropocentrism is anthropomorphism, which can be defined as “the tendency to describe nature and explain physical phenomena using a pattern of human characteristics and human conduct” (Piatek 1988: 12). The analysis has demonstrated that this particular world-

view manifests itself in two principal ways: firstly, in the portrayal of divine beings as human figures, and secondly, in the ascription of human characteristics to plants. This kind of motivation is evident, for example, in the etiological legends which seek to explain the origin of phytonyms, cf. *Boże drzewko* [God's little tree] '*Artemisia abrotanum*' (God as the host planted his tree), *drzewo Pana Jezusa* [Lord Jesus tree] '*Betula pendula*' (a tree guides the Magi to Jesus) or *wierzba płacząca* [weeping willow] '*Salix sepulcralis*' (a willow weeps over the fate of the Holy Family). The emotional and affective states of humans also serve as a point of reference for the naming of objects, such as *placzące dzbanki* [weeping little pitcher] '*Geum rivale*' (the plant characterise by bent stems, which are a symptom of the plant's sadness), or *gniewosz* [sb who is angry] and *uraźnik* [sb who resents sb] '*Impatiens nolitangere*' (the plant's aversive "sensations" when touched by humans may evoke metaphorical feelings of anger or resentment).

The aristocratism, that is to say, the attitude of human superiority towards animals, which is in line with anthropocentrism (Kempf 1985: 126), is mainly manifested in phytonyms with an animalistic component. The terms such as *wilcza borówka* [wolf berry] 'possibly *Daphne mezereum*' or *wilcze ziele* [wolf grass] 'perhaps *Echium vulgare*' usually refer to poisonous plants. The cautionary function of these terms is the result of associations with dangerous animal. The phytonyms like e.g. *kobylak* [sth intend for a mare, Polish *kobyła*] '*Rumex hydrolapathum*', *świniocha* [sth intend for a pig, Polish *świnia*] '*Aegopodium podagraria*' or *gęsie ziele* [goose grass] '*Potentilla anserina*' refer to species that are exclusively suitable for animal consumption. Whereas the phytonyms *psia trawa* [dog grass] '*Nardus stricta*', *psie mleko* [dog milk] '*Euphorbia cyparissias* or *Euphorbia esula*', *psiara*, *psiarka*, *psica* [deprecating, < *pies*, English *dog*] '*Nardus stricta*' and so forth perpetuate the complete lack of value attributed to the plant due to the association with the negative stereotype of the dog.

The dichotomous (or black and white) valuation of reality is reflected, among other things, in the evaluation of plants from the practical-living point of view of the rural community. They can thus be classified as either useful or useless, edible or inedible, true or false, cultivated or wild, harmless or harmful and so on. For example, *dzwonek* [little bell] 'e.g. *Hypericum perforatum*, *Hosta tradiflora*' vs *prawdziwy dzwonek* [real little bell] 'e.g. *Campanula rapunculoides*, *Campanula rotundifolia*', i.e. one that is the most like a bell: 'a metal object that makes a ringing sound'.

The folk botanical names also confirm that the traditional community perceives reality in accordance with sensory impressions. The primary source of human cognition is visual perception. Consequently, language users tend to focus their attention on the colour and shape (or general appearance) of flowers and fruit, cf. *modry kwiatek* [intensive blue, little flower] ‘Centaurea cyanus’, *czernica* [< *czarny*, English *black*] ‘various species of Rubus’, *dzwoneczek* [little bell] ‘e.g. *Campanula rapunculoides*, *Campanula rotundifolia*’, *pantofelnik* [< *pantofel*, English *slipper*] ‘*Cypripedium calceolus*’, *świńskie uszy* [pig’s ears] ‘probably species of *Anthurium*’, *koniki* [little horses] ‘*Aconitum firmum*’. The remaining senses, namely touch, taste, smell and hearing, are employed with considerably less frequency during the nomination process, cf. *suchar* [rusk] ‘*Helichrysum bracteatum*’, *kwaśne ziele* [sour grass] ‘*Rumex acetosa*’, *smrodkie* [< *smród*, English *stench*] ‘various species of *Tagetes*’, *skrzyp* [< *skrzypieć*, English *to squeak*] ‘*Equisetum arvense*’. In certain cases, the subject utilises a variety of senses simultaneously when creating phytonyms, cf. *sadełko* [< *sadło*, English *fat*] ‘*Sedum maximum*’ (eyesight, touch), *waciki* [cotton swabs] ‘*Eriophorum angustifolium*’ (eyesight, touch), *sucze mleko* [bitch’s milk] ‘*Euphorbia esula*; *Euphorbia cyparissias*’ (eyesight, touch, taste, smell).

The indirect sign for instrumental rationality are references to practices restoring health in the plant-related vocabulary, cf. *wrzodowiec* [< *wrzód*, English *ulcer*] ‘perhaps *Arnica montana*’, *płucnik* [< *pluco*, English *lung*] ‘probably *Hepatica nobilis*’, *zrost* [< *zrastać*, English *to bond*] ‘*Symphytum officinale*’, *urocznik* [< *urok*, English *charm*] ‘*Lysimachia vulgaris*’. This type of rationality is also evident in the shaping of space along the lines of one’s own local surroundings, as revealed in aetiological legends, cf. *wierzba płaczaca* [weeping willow] ‘*Salix sepulcralis*’ (a willow covered a Holy family fleeing from Herod’s army), *drzewo Pana Jezusa* [Lord Jesus tree] ‘*Betula pendula*’ (a tree guides the Magi to Jesus). The adaptation of biblical history to a familiar environment makes it more accessible for simple people, facilitating their engagement with the surrounding reality and enhancing their comprehension of the world (Kurek 2003: 46). Furthermore, instrumental rationality is associated with a concrete vision of reality. This mode of conceptualisation obliged the subject, in the act of nomination, to direct attention to a relevant detail of the referent, which was fixed in the name. Therefore, phytonyms indicate a particular plant’s smell, taste, colour

or shape, cf. *śmierdziele* [stinkers] ‘various species of *Tagetes*’, *groszek pachnący* [scented peas] ‘*Lathyrus odoratus*’, *gorczyca* [*< gorycz*, English *bitterness*] ‘*Sinapis alba*’, *kwaśnica* [*< gorycz*, English *sour*] ‘*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*’, *bieluń* [*< biały*, English *white*] ‘*Datura stramonium*’, *modrak* [*< modry*, English *intensive blue*] ‘*Centaurea cyanus*’, *złotnik* [*< złoty*, English *gold*] ‘*Solidago virgaurea*’, *grubosz* [*< gruby*, English *thick*] ‘*Crassula ovata*’, *serduszka* [little hearts] ‘*Dicentra spectabilis*’. Named objects are also perceived in a strictly defined space and at a precisely defined time (Kurek 2004b: 153), cf. *leszczak* [*< las*, English *forest*] ‘*Corylus avellana*’, *przylaszczyka* [*< przy lesie*, English *beside the forest*] ‘*Hepatica nobilis*’, *grudnik* [*< grudzień*, English *December*] ‘*Schlumbergera truncata*’, *jesienniak* [*< jesień*, English *autumn*] ‘various species of *Aster*’, *marcówka* [*< marzec*, English *March*] ‘*Galanthus nivalis*’. A cognitive disposition oriented towards a concrete vision of the world is also reflected in the names of plants related with healing, magical practices or use, cf. *anginka* [*< angina*, English *angina*] ‘*Pelargonium graveolens*’, *glistnik* [*< glista*, English plural *worm*] ‘*Chelidonium majus*’, *grzmotnik* [*grzmot*, English *thunder*] ‘*Alchemilla pastoralis*’, *lubczyk* [*< lubić*, English *to like*] ‘*Levisticum officinale*’, *urocznik* [*< urok*, English *charm*] ‘*Lysimachia vulgaris*’, *kobylak* [*< kobyła*, English *mare*] ‘*Rumex hydrolapathum*’, *świniocha* [*< świnia*, English *pig*] ‘*Aegopodium podagraria*’.

Moreover, the collected research material demonstrates that the rural population is characterised by a practical and utilitarian outlook. This is evidenced by numerous phytonyms that inform about the various possible uses of plants in everyday life, cf. *herbatnik* [*< herbata*, English *tea*] ‘*Hypericum perforatum*’, *kielbaśnik* [*< kielbasa*, English *sausage*] ‘*Origanum majorana*’, *olejnik* [*< olej*, English *oil*] ‘*Ricinus communis*’. The practical-utilitarian approach of the rural community is reflected in the names associated with medicinal treatments or names warning of poisoning, cf. *krwiściąg* [*< krew, ściągać*, English *blood, to draw*] ‘*Sanguisorba officinalis*’, *żywokost* [*< żywy, kość*, English *alive, bond*] ‘*Symphytum officinale*’, *mordownik* [*< mordować*, English *to murder*] ‘*Aconitum firmum*’, *trujak* [*< truć*, English *to poison*] ‘probably shrub with red, single fruits’.

Undoubtedly, the belief in magic represents a particularly salient feature of the folk image of a human, pervading all aspects of life within traditional communities. Nevertheless, only a select few elements of this phenomenon are reflected in the dialectal phytonyms, such as the belief in the

magical powers of plants. It was held that plants had the capacity to restore health, provide protection from dangerous natural occurrences and bring love and happiness, cf. *dziewięciosił* [*< dziewięć, siła*, English *nine, strength*] ‘*Carlina acaulis*’, *przywrotnik* [*< przywracać*, English *to restore*] ‘*Alchemilla pastoralis*’, *piorunica* [*< piorun*, English *lightning*] ‘*Alchemilla pastoralis*’, *miłosne ziele* [amorous herb] ‘*Levisticum officinale*’, *drzewko szczęścia* [happiness tree] ‘*Crassula ovata*’. Besides this, the material collected confirms the belief in charms and the existence of mysterious, destructive forces, cf. *urocznik* [*< urok*, English *charm*] ‘*Lysimachia vulgaris*’, *nietota* [*< to nie ta*, English *this (is) not the one*] ‘*Lycopodium clavatum*’, *diabelski kwiatek* [devil’s flower] ‘*Agrostemma githago*’.

On the other hands, the gathered plant names perpetuate an attachment to Catholicism. Christian faith is marked, for instance, in the sacralisation of certain botanical species, cf. *Boże drzewko* [God’s little tree] ‘*Artemisia abrotanum*’, *drzewo Pana Jezusa* [Lord Jesus tree] ‘*Betula pendula*’. Folk religiosity can also be seen in the names of these plants which are derived from the name of a divine or a saintly person as a result of the various associations between the appearance of the referent and the attributes of the figure, cf. *kluczyki Świętego Piotra* [St Peter’s little keys] ‘*Primula officinalis*, *Primula elatior*’, *Boże liczko* [God’s face] ‘*Tussilago farfara*’, *sukienka Matki Boskiej* [Our Lady’s dress] ‘*Gentiana pneumonanthe*’, *pantofelki Matki Bożej* [Our Lady’s slippers] ‘*Aconitum firmum*’. The phytonyms in question also indirectly reflect common forms of piety, such as the veneration of saints and the worship of their images, cf. *lilia Świętego Józefa* [St Joseph’s lily] ‘*Lilium candidum*’, *lilia Świętego Antoniego* [St Anthony’s lily] ‘*Lilium candidum*’.

In addition, the plant vocabulary suggests the villagers’ simplicity connected with directness, a ribald sense of humour and perspicacity, as well as their tendency to use stereotypes. Simplicity is evident, for example, in the spontaneous, uncomplicated way in which the names are created. The subject in the nominative act does not attempt to utilise sophisticated metaphors; instead, one creates phytonyms through the simplest intuitive associations, cf. *ceglarka* [*< cegla*, English *brick*] ‘*Pelargonium zonale*’, *mordownik* [*< mordować*, English *to murder*] ‘*Aconitum firmum*’, *pantofelek* [*< pantofel*, English *slipper*] ‘*Cypripedium calceolus*’. The directness of the villagers is exemplified by units that possess a distinctive motivational

value; thus, they reflect the plant trait or location in a straightforward and unambiguous manner, cf. *suchar* [rusk] 'Helichrysum bracteatum', *żółciec* [*< żółty*, English *yellow*] 'Rudbeckia laciniata', *grudniaczek* [*< grudzień*, English *December*] 'Schlumbergera truncata', *borówka* [*< bór*, English *forest*] 'Vaccinium myrtillus'. Lexemes with high expressive power, such as those that refer to intimate body parts or embarrassing afflictions, may also be considered examples of directness, cf. *stulidupa* [*< stulić, dupa*, English *to shut down, ass*] 'Capsella bursa-pastoris', *korcipka* [*< cipka*, English *cunt*] 'Prunus padus', *księże jajka* [priests' eggs] 'Polygonatum multiflorum', *bieguniec* [*< biegunka*, English *diarrhea*] 'Ailanthus altissima', *bżdzioch* [*< bżdzieć*, English *to fart*] 'Polygonum hydropiper'. The aforementioned names exhibit a ribald sense of humour that serves to challenge the taboo that has been imposed on the intimate sphere of life.

The rural community's astute observation of reality is further illustrated by the emergence of phytonyms which have been linked to the perception of complex biological phenomena. These include the rotation of flowers towards the sun, e.g. *słonecznik* [*< słońce*, English *sun*] 'Helianthus annuus', the curling of petals at dusk, e.g. *tulipan* [tulip] 'Narcissus jonquilla', *zawilec* [*< zawiąć*, English *to wrap*] 'Anemone nemorosa', the dispersal of seeds by the wind, e.g. *wiatrowe ziele* [wind grass] 'Spergula arvensis', and the periodicity of development, e.g. *siedmiolatka* [seven-year-old] 'Allium fistulosum'.

The dialect plant names frequently evoke both positive and negative images of people, which have become fixed in the consciousness of simple man. Thus, these names exemplify the tendency of villagers to stereotype and simplify reality, cf. *panienka* [maiden] 'Phlox paniculata', *sierotka* [little orphan] 'Bellis perennis', *wdówka* [widow] 'maybe Scabiosa lucida or Scabiosa canescens', *dziad* [beggar] 'Arctium lappa', *pijanica* [*< pijany*, English *drunk*] 'Vaccinium uliginosum', *żydowska wiśnia* [Jewish cherry] 'Physalis alkekengi'. The use of folk lexis with an animalistic component also demonstrates the influence of schematic representations of animals on social consciousness, cf. *wilcze ziele* [wolf grass] 'perhaps Echium vulgare', *gadzi mlecz* [*< gadzi, mleko*, English *reptilian, milk*] 'Chelidonium majus', *psiarka* [deprecating, *< pies*, English *dog*] 'Nardus stricta'.

To a lesser extent, the following characteristics are manifested in phytonyms: folk aetiology, lack of awareness of temporal distance, socio-morphism and miraculous sensibility. A manifestation of folk aetiology, i.e. in

its simplest form, the explaining of the origin of a name or the history of something through the lens of myths and legends (Serafin 2002: 120), are such names as *Boże drzewko* [God's little tree] 'Artemisia abrotanum' or *rdest plamisty* [spotted knotweeds] 'Polygonum persicaria'. A plant called *Boże drzewko* was allegedly planted by God himself, whereas the name *rdest plamisty* is because the spots on the leaves are the result of being touched by the Virgin Mary, according to the beliefs of local people. The legends cited by respondents demonstrate a lack of awareness of the temporal distance between the juxtaposed events and characters (Zowczak 2013: 23). This phenomenon can be observed in the folk etymologies of certain names, such as *wierzba płacząca* [weeping willow] 'Salix sepulcralis' or *drzewo Pana Jezusa* [Lord Jesus tree] 'Betula pendula'. The biblical events referenced are situated within a context that is characteristic of the Polish countryside. This suggests that the lives of Jesus and Mary have been relocated to an unspecified present day.

Socio-morphism, i.e. the tendency to imagine a hierarchy prevailing in the Kingdom of Heaven along the lines of the order known from a serfdom village (Zowczak 2013: 52), appears in the legend explaining the origin of the name *Boże drzewko* [God's little tree] 'Artemisia abrotanum'. In the account of the origin of the name, the creator is depicted as a benevolent host. The miraculous sensibility associated with religiosity – that is to say, the desire to experience miracles (Hemka, Olędzki 1990: 9) – was evident in the motivations of such individuals as *drzewo Pana Jezusa* [Lord Jesus tree] 'Betula pendula' (a birch tree guided the Three Kings to the newborn Jesus) or *rdest plamisty* [spotted knotweeds] 'Polygonum persicaria' (the stain that appeared on a leaf had been touched by the Virgin Mary).

Furthermore, plant terms are an expression of humans' intimate connection with nature. This relationship is reflected in the plant names which are derived from the location, where they are found or the time of year when they are in bloom, cf. *bagno* [< *bagno*, English *swamp*] 'Caltha palustris', *przylasczka* [< *przy lesie*, English *beside the forest*] 'Hepatica nobilis', *majowniczka* [< *maj*, English *May*] 'Maianthemum bifolium', *zimowit* [< *zima, witać*, English *winter, to greet*] 'Colchicum autumnal'.

The dialect botanical lexis also suggests, albeit in a somewhat fragmented manner, a number of fundamental tenets of the folk worldview, including ethnocentrism, the primacy of the family and the importance of

work, as well as a perception of reality that is shaped by the past. The sense of separateness experienced by the subject, which is based on the opposition of 'own' and 'foreign', is particularly evident in plant names that are motivated by origin, cf. *amerykanka* [American] 'Solanum tuberosum', *węgierka* [Hungarian] 'Prunus domestica', *szwabka* [Swabian] 'Solanum tuberosum'. Terms such as *język teściowej* [mother-in-law's tongue] 'Sansevieria trifasciata', *wdówka* [widow] 'maybe Scabiosa lucida or Scabiosa crenata', *sierotka* [orphan girl] 'Bellis perennis' are indicative of social connections or the absence thereof. The work is represented by lexical items that evoke animals or objects associated with the agricultural setting, cf. *gęsiówka* [< *gęś*, English *goose*] 'Echinochloa crusgalli', *wole oczy* [ox's eyes] 'Aster alpinus', *kosy* [scythes] 'Iris sibirica', *widłak* [< *widły*, English *pitchforks*] 'Lycopodium annotinum; Lycopodium clavatum', *miotła* [broom] 'Apera spica-venti'. A wealth of information about a bygone era can be gleaned from the etymology of plant names which refer to old-time food, diseases, the monetary system and herbal medicine, cf. *trędownik* [< *trqd*, English *leprosy*] 'Scrophularia nodosa', *talary* [thalers] 'Lunaria annua'.

5. CONCLUSION

It is readily apparent that the enumerated elements of the human image encompass those that are characteristic of Polish rural communities, as well as universal characteristics that can be ascribed to all communities within the Slavic and even European cultural circle. It is not feasible to clearly divide the traits derived from the analysis into two distinct categories, namely rural and non-rural. This is because the linguistic material encompasses, as mentioned, dialectal vocabulary and also lexis that is common to different varieties of Polish. An insight into the motivations of the phytonyms therefore provides an understanding not only of the rural community itself but also of the nature of a human in general. Nevertheless, the reconstructed image of a human cannot be identified with their national or supranational image. This is because dialect explanations form the basis for the search for regularities that allow us to discover the image recorded in the names of plants. Consequently, the article uses the term *folk image*, which, it should be noted, refers to the Lublin ethnolinguistic research on stereotypes.

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THE FOLK IMAGE OF A HUMAN PRESERVED
IN THE DIALECTAL PLANT NAMES.
AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUES

S u m m a r y

The objective of this article is to present the folk image of a human perpetuated in dialectal plant names. The subject of the analysis comprises 647 informal names of plants used by the Gorals, an ethnic group residing in the Rabka region. Accordingly, the research was conducted in nine villages situated in the southwestern region of Lesser Poland, within the northern Nowy Targ district, which is located in the northwest of the Podhale region. The material was collected between 2016 and 2017 through unofficial interviews with villagers.

The first section of the paper is dedicated to methodological considerations. The author's primary focus is on the research challenges that emerge from the distinctive nature of the collected material. Consideration leads to the conclusion that it is possible to reconstruct a folk image of a human, rather than an image of a rural community, on the basis of phytonyms collected in villages. This assumption is primarily attributable to the fact that the gathered lexis encompasses both the vocabulary typical of the studied group and words common to disparate varieties of Polish, i.e. phytonyms derived from various sources. The members of the contemporary community rediscover the meanings of these units by referring to local customs, beliefs, general knowledge and certain laws of nature.

The author emphasises that the plant names do not inherently perpetuate an image of a human *per se*. The source of knowledge about the categorisation of the world and the values is the naming mechanism itself. In order to uncover the principles governing naming processes, it is necessary to search for regularities. Therefore, the researcher groups the collected names into dozens of experiential and cultural categories.

The second section of the article presents the findings of the analysis conducted on folk plant names, offering insights into the characteristics of the simple man. The most significant of these are: anthropocentrism, aristocratism, binary perception of reality, sensory perception of the world, instrumental rationality, concreteness, pragmatism, attachment to Catholicism and magical beliefs. The plant-related vocabulary studied also suggests that representatives of folk culture are direct, simple, have a ribald sense of humour and tend to stereotype. To a lesser extent, folk aetiology, lack of awareness of temporal distance, socio-morphism or miraculous sensibility are indirectly perpetuated in the phytonyms. The

collected plant lexis furthermore implies, albeit in a fragmentary way, such important components of the folk worldview as ethnocentrism, the primary importance of family or work and the strong bond with nature.

KEYWORDS: dialectology, ethnolinguistics, linguistic worldview, image of a human, names of plants, dialect of Podhale region.

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TARMINIUOSE AUGALŲ PAVADINIMUOSE IŠSAUGOTAS
LIAUDIES ŽMOGAUS VAIZDINYS. PROBLEMŲ APŽVALGA

S a n t r a u k a

Šio straipsnio tikslas – pristatyti liaudišką žmogaus įvaizdį, jamžintą tarminiais augalų pavadinimais. Analizės objektas yra 647 neoficialūs augalų pavadinimai, kuriuos vartojo Rabkos regione gyvenanti goralų etninė grupė. Atitinkamai tyrimas buvo atliktas devyniuose kaimuose pietvakarių Mažosios Lenkijos regione, šiauriniame Naujojo Targo rajone, kuris yra Podhalės regiono šiaurės vaikruose. Medžiaga buvo renkama 2016–2017 metais per neoficialius pokalbius su kaimo gyventojais.

Pirmoji straipsnio dalis skirta metodologiniams svarstymams. Autorės dėmesys sutelktas į tyrimo išskūkius, kylančius dėl išskirtinio surinktos medžiagos pobūdžio. Analizė leidžia daryti išvadą, kad remiantis kaimuose surinktais fitonimais galima atkurti liaudišką žmogaus, o ne kaimo bendruomenės įvaizdį. Ši prielaida visų pirmą sietina su tuo, kad surinkta leksika apima ir tiriamai grupei būdingą žodyną, ir įvairoioms lenkų kalbos tarmėms bendrus žodžius, t. y. fitonimus iš įvairių šaltinių. Šiuolaikinės bendruomenės nariai iš naujo atranda šių vienetų reikšmes remdamiesi vienos papročiais, tikėjimais, bendromis žiniomis ir tam tikrais gamtos dėsniais.

Pabrėžiama, kad augalų pavadinimai savaime nejamžina žmogaus įvaizdžio. Žinių apie pasaulio ir vertybų skirstymą į kategorijas šaltinis yra pats įvardijimo mechanizmas. Norint atskleisti įvardijimo procesus valdančius principus, būtina ieškoti dėsningumų. Todėl surinkti pavadinimai yra sugrupuoti į dešimtis patirties ir kultūrinių kategorijų.

Antroje straipsnio dalyje pateikiami liaudiškų augalų pavadinimų analizės rezultatai, ižvalgos apie paprasto žmogaus savybes. Reikšmingiausios iš jų: antropocentrizmas, aristokratizmas, binarinis tikrovės suvokimas, juslinis pasaulio suvokimas, praktinis racionalumas, konkretumas, pragmatiškumas, prisirišimas prie katalikybės ir magiški įsitikinimai. Ištirtas augalų žodynas taip pat rodo, kad liaudies kultūros atstovai yra tiesūs, paprasti, turi niūrų humoro jausmą ir linkę į stereotipus. Fitonimais netiesiogiai įamžinta liaudiška etiologija, laiko distancijos suvokimo stoka, socialinis morfizmas ar tikėjimas stebuklais. Be to, surinkta augalų leksika, nors ir fragmentiškai, suponuoja tokius svarbius liaudies pasaulėžiūros komponentus kaip etnocentrizmas, pirminė šeimos ar darbo svarba ir stiprus ryšys su gamta.

ESMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: dialektologija, etnolinguistikos, kalbinė pasaulėžiūra, žmogaus vaizdinys, augalų pavadinimai, Podhalės regiono dialektas.

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