

Glossary on commons (Romania)

Chingă

see also: *Funie*; also known as: *Curea*.

(Stripe)

It has a similar meaning as *funie*. It is rather used in villages from Walachia. (*Parnuta et al. 2003*)

Composesorat

(Forestry commons)

This is a type of property specific to southeast Transylvania, among the communities of Romanian customs guardians. It was established in the eighteenth century and refers to the forestry commons (see for details the case studies on the website www.collective-action.info). (*Sisestean-Popa 2009*; *Sisestean 2010*; *Stefanuc 2010*)

Comunitate de avere

(Community of Fortune)

It designates the forestry commons that resulted from the dissolution of the Romanian Transylvanian Customs guards at the end of the nineteenth century. (*Rosu 2010*; *Sisestean 2010*; *Sisestean 2009*)

Curea

see: *Funie*, *Chingă*.

Delniță

see also: *Jrebie*.

A theoretical unit of land a commoner mastered. It is of slavonic origin meaning "a small part". (*Panaitescu 1964*)

Destrămarea obștii

(Commons break-up)

The process of breaking up the commons, which process began in the seventeenth century and ended (for agricultural land) at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Most of the forestry commons have been broken up at the beginning of the twentieth century. (*Caramelea 2005*; *Stahl 1998*; *Parnuta et al. 2003*; *Popa 2010*)

Devălmaș

see also: *Indiviz*.

(Commoner)

It designates a person who had common ownership with other persons over land, forest, or pastures. (*Stahl 1998*; *Caramelea 2005*)

Devălmășie

see also: *Obște, Indiviziune*.

(Common ownership)

This Slavonic term designates common ownership. In medieval documents the term had a juridical status. In the modern juridical terms it was replaced by the term "severalty". Today the term is used only by historians. (*Stahl 1998; Caramelea 2005*)

Dram

see also: *Drept*.

A theoretical unit of measuring the "right" of a commoner to a common forest. Still used in villages from Walachia. (*Caramelea 2005; Parnuta et al. 2003*)

Drept

see also: *Dram*.

(Right (as in property rights))

This term refers to the number of rights a commoner has either on land or on forest. According to the number of rights (which could vary from 10 to 25, etc.) a commoner could claim the right to cut trees from the common forest, or receive money in case the forest was exploited, or the pasture was rent, to outsiders for money. It is still in use today in villages from Moldavia and Wallachia. (*Stahl 1998*)

Funie

see also: *Chingă*; also: *Curea*.

(Rope)

The piece of land which resulted after the common agricultural land was split up among the commoners. (*Panaitescu 1964; Parnuta et al. 2003*)

Hotar

also known as: *Răzor*.

(Edge)

It designates the border of a plot of land or forest. It is still in use, but nowadays, it also designates the borders between pices of private land and forest. (*Panaitescu 1964; Stahl 1998*)

Indiviz

see also: *Devălmaș*.

(Commoner)

It designates somebody who shares communal rights with other people. This is a term of Latin origin, used in the actual juridical documents. (*Stahl 1998; Grigoras et al. 1980*)

Indiviziune

see also: *Devălmășie, Obste*.

(Common ownership)

The technical-juridical term used today to designate commons. It is used in official documents only, while in popular language "*devalmas*" is still the term currently used. (*Grigoras et al. 1980*)

Jrebie

see also: *Delnita*.

It means the same as *delniță*, but this term was mostly used in Moldavia. (*Panaitescu 1964*)

Jurământ cu brazda pe cap

(Taking an oath with a land furrow on his/her head)

This is a medieval (maybe even older, but we have no proof of this) way of taking an oath. In a dispute between two parts, this was the way of getting the true owner, as it was assumed that nobody would lie about land property while having some soil on his/her head, since lying about land ownership in such a situation would allegedly bring tremendous misfortune to the liar. (*Stahl 1998; Panaitescu 1964*)

Megieș

(Member of a common)

This is a term of certain Slavonic origin meaning "neighbor". It has disappeared from the modern Romanian language, but in the medieval documents it referred to the commoner. Sometimes also used in the documents in the literally meaning of "neighbor". (*Panaitescu 1964; Caramelea 2005*)

Moină

see also: *Tarla*.

(Fallow land)

Land left uncultivated in order to regenerate after it was cultivated with crops for several years. (*Stahl 1998*)

Moșnean

see also: *Răzeș*.

(Member of a common)

Originally used to indicate the member of a common, later it was used to designate also the free land holder as opposed to the servant. The term was used in Walachia. (*Panaitescu 1964; Stahl 1998*)

Moși

see also: *Umblare pe moși*.

(Ancestors, old men)

The first settlers of a village, those who founded a village. They also established the borders of the village and the collective land and forest. (*Stahl 1998*)

Oameni buni si bătrâni

(Old good men)

It designates the old people from a community responsible with judging the conflicts among commoners. They actually judged not only land conflicts but all sorts of conflicts within the village. If justice was not done, then people would ask for superior instances. (*Panaiteescu 1964; Stahl 1998*)

Obște

see also: *Devălmășie, Indiviziune*.

(Commons, Village)

The term is of Slavic origin and means both "village" and "commons". See for instance "*padurea de obște*" which is translated as "common forest". It has also the meaning of "an entire entity", something that cannot be divided. (*Stahl 1998*)

Obște megieșească

also known as: *Obștean*.

(The community of commoners)

Term used to designate the commoners as a whole. The term disappeared from the modern Romanian language. Both parts of the term ("*obște*" and "*megieș*") are of Slavonic origin.

Obștean

see: *Obște megieșească*.

Răboj

(Notch)

A wooden instrument to measure the quantity of sheep milk. After measuring the total amount of milk produced, each household then received its part, according to the number of sheep they had grazed on the communal pasture. Most probably the origin of the word is Slavonic. (*Panaiteescu 1964*)

Răzeș

see also: *Moșnean*.

(Member of a common)/Member of a common. Later used to designate also the free land holder as opposed to a servant. The term was used in Moldavia.

(*Panaiteescu 1964; Stahl 1998; Stahl 1993*)

Răzor

see: *Hotar*.

Tarină

(Crop land)

The land cultivated with crops. The word has a slavic origin. (*Panaiteacu 1964*)

Tarla

see also: *Moină*.

(Field)

A land alternatively cultivated. It is different than *moină* because it involves three different fields. One field was used to cultivate wheat or rye, the second to cultivate barley or rye and the third one was left laying fallow. This system was specific to villages characterized as composesorate (in Transylvania) and involved a very precise reglementation of agricultural work. (*Panaiteacu 1964*)

Umblare pe moși

see also: *Moși*.

("Walking with *moși*")

Sharing the common land among commoners based on ancestral ownership, presumably by those who founded the common. (*Panaiteacu 1964; Stahl 1998*)