

# Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube: III

Re-thinking the meaning  
of Symbiosis -Past,  
Present and Future

Edited by

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and

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**Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube: III**  
Re-thinking the meaning of Symbiosis—Past, Present and Future

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# The Aftermath of Renaming Bratislava after 1919

## —A Reflection on the Name of a City in the Borderlands (Part III)

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(Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan)

### Introduction

I already published in our publications two articles focused on the renaming process of Bratislava.<sup>1</sup> In this article I treat as the third part of the problem three topics from the aftermath of renaming Bratislava: I. The Name Bratislava is “Untranslatable” in the Autumn of 1919; II. Legal Disputes Over the Name Pressburg (1922-1924); III. On the Renaming Process of the Streets and Other Public Places in Bratislava After 1919.

### I. The Name Bratislava is “Untranslatable” in the Autumn of 1919

In my previous article I wrote that “We might conclude that the renaming process of the city to Bratislava had basically finished by the end of March

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1 NAGAYO, Susumu: A Reflection on the Names of a City in the Borderlands - Pressburg/Pozsony/Prešporok/Bratislava (I). In: IEDA, Osamu (ed.): *Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube. EU integration between Slovakia and Hungary from a local border perspective*. Sapporo 2014, pp. 1-16.; When did Bratislava become Bratislava?—A Reflection on the Name of a City in the Borderlands (Part II). In: Osamu Ieda & Susumu Nagayo (eds.): *Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube. II. Road to a Multidimensional Ethnic Symbiosis in the Mid-Danube Region*. Sapporo 2015, pp. 45-69.

1919]”.<sup>2</sup> However, as several documents reveal, in the autumn of 1919 the “untranslatability” of the name Bratislava was repeatedly emphasized. For the moment we have six documents which testify to this fact.

Chronologically, the first document is a circular letter published by the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia [Vavro Šrobár] on October 4, 1919, titled “To All District and Subordinate Offices in Slovakia!” It reads: “I declare that the official and one proper name of our city is Bratislava. It is necessary to announce to your subordinate offices that only the name Bratislava should be used in printed papers, official stamps and on every occasion. / In Bratislava, October 4, 1919. / In place of the Minister, Dr. Ivan Markovič<sup>3</sup>, the governmental officer”.<sup>4</sup>

The next document, dated October 14, 1919, is a reprint of the above-cited ordinance of the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia of October 4, 1919. It is titled “The Official and Only One Proper Name of Our City”. The same text is repeated and then the following sentences are added: “For further responsible repetition of the name I inform this ordinance to all subordinate offices. / Bratislava, October 14, 1919. / In place of the head of the district, Dr. [Ivan] Galla”.<sup>5</sup>

The third document with the same topic is the ordinance of the Minister, V. Šrobár, of October 23, with contents applied on a wider scale, titled “To All Heads of the District, All Governmental Officers”. The ordinance reads: “As the

2 NAGAYO, Susumu: When did Bratislava become Bratislava?, *Ibid.*, p.64.

3 Ivan Markovič (1888-1944), Slovak lawyer and politician. During the First World War, he participated in the Czechoslovak movement for independence in Russia and France. At that time, in 1919, he was a governmental officer in the Ministry for the Administration of Slovakia. Later he served in various positions as minister and member of the National Assembly of the Social Democratic Party. During the Second World War, Markovič was arrested by Germans and died in the concentration camp in Buchenwald.

4 *Úradné noviny* [The Official Bulletin], Numbers 30-31, Bratislava, October 17, 1919. *Úradné Noviny* was founded on January 1, 1919 in the city of Žilina by the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia, V. Šrobár. Numbers 1 to 5 of the Bulletin were published in Žilina, then from number 6 (February 28) in Bratislava. It is strange that the Bulletin mentioned the name Bratislava, according to my investigation, only once in the circular letter in Numbers 30-31, October 17.

5 *Úradné noviny župy bratislavskej / Pozsonyvármegye Hivatalos Lapja* [The Official Bulletin of the Bratislava/Pozsony District], No. 48, November 27, 1919.

official name of the cities with the district office only the Slovak version is announced. These names of cities are untranslatable. Please notify this to your subordinate offices, post offices, railway stations and other offices in the district and publish it in the official bulletins of the district. / Bratislava, October 23, 1919, Minister”.<sup>6</sup>

The next document, which responded to the Minister’s previous order, is published in *Úradný list Riaditeľstva pošt a telegrafov pre Slovensko v Bratislave* [The Official Bulletin of the Head Office of the Post and Telegraph for Slovakia in Bratislava] (Volume 1, No. 16, November 15, 1919) with the title “The Official Names of the Cities”. It reads: “By the order of the Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia we announce that the official names of the cities with the district office have only the Slovak version. These names of the cities are untranslatable. / In Bratislava, October 31, 1919”.<sup>7</sup>

The following document is also a response to the Minister’s order. It is published in *Úradné noviny župy bratislavskej / Pozsonyvármegy Hivatalos Lapja* dated November 13, 1919, with the title “The Official Names of the City with the District Office”. It was a reprint of the Minister’s order of October 23, 1919, with the additional sentence: “I notify all officers and mayors and the municipal representatives of the information. / Bratislava, November 8, 1919. In place of the head of the district: Dr. Galla”.<sup>8</sup>

The last and sixth document is the copy of the notice of the Head Office of the Post and Telegraph in Bratislava to the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph in Prague (dated Bratislava, November 20, 1919) with the title “The Official Names of the Cities in Slovakia with the District Offices”. It reads: “By the order of the

6 Národní archiv [The National Archives] (Prague), Ministerstvo vnitra - stará registratura [Ministry of the Interior - the Old Registry Office], kartón 586, Spisovna. 1919-1924. Oddělení spisovny 21, číslo 252, podčíslo 1. In 1920, there were 16 districts in Slovak territory (cities with district offices are in parentheses): Bratislava District (Bratislava), Nitra District (Nitra), Komárno District (Komárno), Trenčín District (Trenčín), Tekov District (Zlaté Moravce), Turiec District (Turčiansky svätý Martin), Orava District (Dolný Kubín), Liptov District (Liptovský Mikuláš), Zvolen District (Banská Bystrica), Hont District (Šahy), Novohrad District (Lučenec), Gemer-Malohont District (Rimavská Sobota), Spiš District (Levoča), Šariš District (Prešov), Abou-Turňa District (Košice), and Zemplín District (Michalovce).

7 Národní archiv (Prague), Ministerstvo vnitra, Ibid.

8 *Úradné noviny župy bratislavskej / Pozsonyvármegy Hivatalos Lapja* [The Official Bulletin of the Bratislava/Pozsony District], No. 46, November 13, 1919.

Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia it is announced by Order No. 8449, Presidium of October 24 [23? - S.N.], 1919, that the official names of cities with the district office have only the Slovak version. / These names of the cities are untranslatable. / This order will be published in No. XVI of the “*Úradný list [Riaditeľstva pošt a telegrafov pre Slovensko v Bratislave]*”. / President / Knotek”.<sup>9</sup>

As these six documents demonstrate, the initiator of the declaration that only the Slovak version of the name Bratislava (and other cities with district offices) is allowed and that they are “untranslatable” (that is, the use of the names in other languages is not permitted) was the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia, V. Šrobár.

For the moment it is not clear why the official name Bratislava after half a year of its official announcement at the end of March, 1919, became again the subject of official notification and why the expression “untranslatability” of the name Bratislava was emphasized. We can only guess that the conventional names of the city, Pressburg and Pozsony, were still used even at an official level.

For example in the Hungarian part (on the right half of the pages) of *Úradné noviny župy bratislavskej / Pozsonyvármegye Hivatalos Lapja*, the name Pozsony was continuously used even after the end of March, 1919, when the name Bratislava was officially established. In the Hungarian part of the Bulletin, according to my investigation, the name “Bratislava” first appeared on July 14, 1919. From the end of September Bratislava was increasingly used besides the conventional name Pozsony and during October the switch from Pozsony to Bratislava was almost complete. Pozsony was last used on November 20. This means that at an official level the name Bratislava was established even in the Hungarian part of the Bulletin during September to November, 1919. It is necessary to point out that the Hungarian title of the Official Bulletin of the Bratislava District was changed from *Pozsonyvármegye Hivatalos Lapja* to *Bratislavavármegye Hivatalos Lapja* from the issue published on June 23, 1921.<sup>10</sup>

As the second example, we examine the publication *Zlatá kniha mesta Bratislavy* [The Golden Book of the City Bratislava]<sup>11</sup>, which was issued in 1928

9 Národní archiv (Prague), Ministerstvo vnitra. op. cit.

10 Underlined by S. N.

11 *Zlatá kniha mesta Bratislavy* [The Golden Book of the City Bratislava], vydavateľská spoločnosť “Čechoslovakia”, Bratislava 1928.



on the occasion of the tenth year anniversary of the incorporation of the city into Czechoslovakia. It has the German title *Das Goldene Buch der Stad Bratislava* and the Hungarian title *Bratislava város aranykönyve*.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly enough, we find in this publication both names, Pressburg and Pozsony. For example, in the following articles “Aus der Geschichte der Deutschen in Pressburg [From the History of Germans in Pressburg]” by J. Portisch (pp. 125-128), which has no mention of the name “Bratislava”, “A Bratislava-Pozsonyi Magyarország [The Hungarians in Bratislava-Pozsony]” by István Arkauer (pp. 129-132), which did not use the name “Bratislava” except in the title, and “Judentum in Bratislava-Pressburg [The Jewish People in Bratislava-Pressburg]” by Josef Grünsfeld (pp. 151-157), which uses both “Bratislava-Pressburg” and “Pressburg”, we find the name Pressburg and Pozsony.<sup>13</sup> Judging by these cases, it seems that the use of both names was tolerated after 1919.

## II. Legal Disputes Over the Name Pressburg (1922-1924)

The second topic of our discussion, which is related to the first one, is the fate of both names, Pressburg and Pozsony. The article of the Slovak historian, Dušan Kováč, which describes the history of Bratislava from the beginning of the First World War in 1914 to its incorporation to Czechoslovakia in 1919, summarizes in the conclusion that “Besides the official name Bratislava the German name Pressburg and the Hungarian name Pozsony were further used. The German newspaper was published as before as *Pressburger Zeitung*”.<sup>14</sup> However, in the file of the National Archive in Prague (Chodovec) we find several documents which suggest troubles with the use of the name Pressburg.

Here three problematic cases are recorded. The first case is an inquiry of the Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia in Bratislava to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague (dated August 31, 1922), which is titled “The Austrian Consul in Bratislava, Complaint”. It reads: “The Austrian

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12 Underlined by S. N.

13 Underlined by S. N.

14 KOVÁČ, Dušan: Cesta z Prešporoku do Bratislavy. Začlenenie mesta do Prvej ČSR [The Way from Prešporok to Bratislava. Incorporation of the City into the First Czechoslovak Republic]. *Historická revue* [The Historical Review], Bratislava, No. 3, 2015, p. 53. The article is written from an unprejudiced and well-balanced viewpoint.

consul in Bratislava uses not only as the indication of his office “Oesterreichisches Konsulat Pressburg”, but also in his official notice to our Ministry, the official place of the Ministry is written as “Pressburg”. / Because the name “Bratislava” is untranslatable and it is not allowed in official correspondences to use other names, please notify the Austrian consul in Bratislava the unsuitability of his action and please inform us [the Ministry for the Administration of Slovakia] about your measures”.<sup>15</sup>

The next document, which is directly related to the first one, is an inquiry from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior with the title “Bratislava, the Official Name of the City” (dated September 9, 1922, received on September 14, 1922). It reads: “The Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the Austrian consul in Bratislava uses for the indication of his office and in his official correspondence to the Ministry the name Pressburg. The Ministry Plenipotentiary asks the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to remind the consul the unsuitability of his deed. / The Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks your [the Ministry of the Interior’s] opinion”.<sup>16</sup>

Receiving this inquiry from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior did the review of the process of the renaming to Bratislava in 1919. On November 2, 1922, they answered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a detailed reproduction of the process which read: “At the time, when the above-mentioned decrees of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry Plenipotentiary [for the Administration of Slovakia] were published [i. e. in February-October of 1919 - S.N.], the Hungarian legislative law No. IV of 1898 was still in force, according to which, as for the change of the official name, the matter would be fixed by the Minister of the Interior after listening to the relevant municipality and its general assembly (although the municipality [of the city of Bratislava] was not listened to they [the municipality] did not complain about the decree). According to [Hungarian] law, a municipality can have only one official name. [...] The Hungarian law did not request a publication of the

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15 Národní archiv (Prague), Ministerstvo vnitra, op. cit.

16 Ibid. In this document we read as the opinion of the Ministry of the Interior the interesting summary of the history of the renaming process of Bratislava. We publish the entire text as a reference material in Appendix 2 at the end of the article. On this topic see also the notice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior of October 17, 1922, Ibid.

given changes”.<sup>17</sup>

Based on this official statement, the Ministry of the Interior concluded: “According to the provision in paragraph 4 in the law of April 14, 1920, No. 266, of the Collection of Laws and Orders [of the Czechoslovak State], the official names must be used by all courts, state and public offices, organs, institutes and enterprises, and also in correspondences with them”.<sup>18</sup>

\* \* \*

The second case of the troubles about the name Pressburg has the following content. The newspaper article from *Československá republika* [Czechoslovak Republic] (April 28, 1923) with the title “The Name Bratislava is Untranslatable”, reports that “the Ministry of Slovakia did not allow the society Pressburger Liedertafel [male chorus] in Bratislava to use the name “Pressburger Liedertafel” for the reason that the name Bratislava is untranslatable. The society filed a complaint to the Supreme Administrative Court which, however, rejected this complaint indicating that already on October 4, 1919, the Minister Plenipotentiary proclaimed the name of the city as Bratislava, using the [Hungarian] legislative law No. IV of 1898, according to which every municipality can have only one [official] name”.<sup>19</sup>

In connection with this news, the Ministry of the Interior sent to the administrative department of the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia in Bratislava the following request on May 24, 1923, together with the above-cited newspaper clipping. It reads: “The Ministry of the Interior learned from the newspaper that the Supreme Administrative Court gave the judgment about the complaint of the Pressburger Liedertafel to your [the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia’s] judgment which did not allow a society to use the name Pressburger Liedertafel for the reason that the name Bratislava is untranslatable. The Ministry of the Interior requests one copy of the judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court. / In Prague, May 24, 1923”.<sup>20</sup>

Chronologically, it followed the notice of the Minister Plenipotentiary for

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17 Ibid., see Appendix 2.

18 Ibid., see Appendix 2.

19 Ibid. We have to comment that, as we saw above in this article, there is no mention in the Minister’s ordinance of October 4, 1919, about the Hungarian legislative law No. IV of 1898. See pp. 1-2 of this article.

20 Ibid.

the Administration of Slovakia in Bratislava to the Ministry of the Interior in Prague of June 4, 1923 with the title “Item: Bratislava - The Untranslatability of the Names”. It reads: “To No. 31746/14/1923 of May 24, 1923, I state that the copy of the judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court on the untranslatability of the names of the city Bratislava was sent to the Ministry of the Interior on May 22, 1923, with the information of April 27, 1923, under our number 5061/Administration, V.”<sup>21</sup>

The other document on the same case is an announcement made by the Ministry of the Interior (dated April 27, 1923, received on May 23, 1923) which informed the editorial department of *Věstník Ministerstva vnitra* [The Bulletin of the Ministry of the Interior] to publish the judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court on April 14, 1923. The announcement reads: “The Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia sends us [the Ministry of the Interior] a copy of the judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court on April 14, 1923, No. 2573/23, by which it was recognized, that the name Bratislava is the exclusive official name and that the side (namely the society Liedertafel in Bratislava) does not have the right to use the name Pressburger Liedertafel, because the rules of the societies in Slovakia, according to the regulation of the former Hungarian government which was in force until that time, have to be officially complied to. From this it is clear that it [the rules of the societies in Slovakia] obeys the official document and official negotiations.

The Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia proposes that the official name of the city of Bratislava is the only name. The minister gives as the reason for this proposal that already by the regulation of February 4, 1920, No. 7931, of the Presidium administration, the Minister proclaimed that the name Bratislava is untranslatable, that the use of this name is thus established, and that there was no objection from any side against its use.

Whether the name Bratislava has to remain in future the only official name in the new official list of places, will be decided on the occasion of the negotiation of the results of the review in the plenum of the standing commission and then by the handing of materials over to print. / Please keep this! / In Prague, June 5 [illegible - S. N.], 1923”<sup>22</sup>

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21 Ibid.

22 Ibid. See also: 1) The notice of the administrative department of the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia to the Ministry of the Interior of April 27, 1923; 2) The judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court, titled “Im Namen der ts-

The notice of the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia in Bratislava to the Ministry of the Interior in Prague of December 1, 1922, with the title “The Review of the Names of the Municipalities and Settlements in Slovakia”, is related to the previous document of November 2, 1922. It reads: “The inner working committee in my office resolved that the only official name of the city Bratislava is “Bratislava”. / Our standpoint is that this name is historical and that it is already by the order of February 4, 1920, No. 7931, of the Presidium administration established. I [the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia] claimed that the official name is Bratislava, that it is untranslatable, that the use of the name is thus established, and that there were up to this time no objections from any side against its use. / According to a provision in the law of April 14, 1920, No. 266, of the Collection of Laws and Orders [of the Czechoslovak State], I ask the Ministry of the Interior to approve my proposal.”<sup>23</sup>

\* \* \*

The third and last case of the complication about the name concerns the postal matter with the name “Pressburg” in its address. A document (No. 235.740-VI/1923, dated Prague, November 27, 1923), has the title “Postal Matter with the Name “Pressburg” in Transport is Acceptable”. In it we read that “recently it happened that the domestic postal matter, in which addresses were written in languages other than the state language [“Czechoslovak” - S. N.], the name “Pressburg” was not accepted for transport or returned during transport. / The offices are cautioned in the *Úřední list* [The Official Bulletin] No. 3 of 1920, / No. 32557-IVa/1920/ that those who do not follow this order will be strictly punished”.<sup>24</sup>

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chechoslowakischen Republik [In the Names of the Czechoslovak Republic]” of April 14, 1923, Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid. Also see the following seven documents in this file: 1) A notice from the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph to the Head Office of the Post and Telegraph of September 24, 1919 with the title “The German Names in the Addresses of the Postal Matter”; 2) A notice of the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph to the Head Office of the Post and Telegraph of February 6, 1920 with the title: “Item: Return of Postal Matters with the Data of the City “Pressburg”; 3) A notice with the title “German Names of the Cities and the Streets in the Addresses of the Postal Matter of February 23, 1920; 4) A newspaper clipping of *Národní Politika* [National Politics] of October 3, 1922, No. 271, with the title: Use of the name “Pressburg” is not

Three months later, the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph sent to the Ministry of the Interior an answer (No. 6837-VIII-1924, dated February 14, 1924) with the title “The Name Bratislava - Delivery of the Postal Matter with the Name “Pressburg” in its Address”. It reads: “The statement in *Úřední list Ředitelství pošt a telegrafů* [The Official Bulletin of the Head Office of the Post and Telegraph] in Prague of December 11, 1923, No. 32, about which the newspaper *Národní listy* [National Paper] of December 18, 1923, No. 346, mentions, was stimulated by the complaint that they return as undeliverable the postal matter, in which addresses are written with the name “Pressburg”.

This statement reminded the post offices of the regulation of February 23, 1920, which was published according to the directions of decree No. 35482/IV ex 1919 of September 24, 1919, and No. 50581/IV ex 1919 of February 6, 1920.

Publishing this last decree, the Ministry of the Post also paid attention to the resolution of the Ministerial Council of February 19, 1919, and the letter of the Presidium of the Ministerial Council of February 22, 1919, No. 3304, in order to use officially for the name of the city Prešpurk the name “Bratislav” or, as later corrected, “Bratislava”.

This resolution did not touch upon private relationships. Copies of both statements in *Úřední list Ředitelství pošt a telegrafů* in Prague and the copy of the mentioned decree are attached”.<sup>25</sup>

These three cases suggest that the use of the name Pressburg (and perhaps also Pozsony) after 1919 might have had problems. We should further investigate in which cases the use of these names were permitted and in which cases it was problematized as disobedience against the laws and ordinances of the Czechoslovak Republic, including the case of “*Pressburger Zeitung*”, which was published under this title until 1929.

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allowed; 5) A notice of the Head office of the Post and Telegraph to the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph of November 27, 1923 with the title “Return of Postal Matters with the Address “Pressburg” by the Postal Office in Děčín”; 6) A newspaper clipping of *Národní List* [National Paper] of December 18, 1923, No. 346, with the title “Bratislava - Pressburg”; 7) A notice of the Ministry of the Interior (perhaps) to the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph of January 25, 1924. Ibid.

25 Ibid.

Also see the document “Official Name of the City Bratislava, its Use in German Periodicals” of June 8, 1920. Národní archiv (Prague), Ministerstvo vnitra, Ibid.

### III. On the Renaming Process of the Streets and Other Public Places in Bratislava After 1919

Finally, as the third topic we focus on the renaming process of the streets, squares, parks and other public places in the city. Renaming the city to Bratislava became, as we confirmed before, an established fact at the end of March, 1919. However, it was just the beginning of the whole complicated process of renaming the numerous public places in the city.

On this topic, we find among others a symbolic description with a touch of irony in the proclamation *Programm vtiahnutia československej vlády do Prešporoka* [Program of the Entrance of the Czechoslovak Government into Prešporok]<sup>26</sup>. Judging by its contents it was written at the end of January, 1919. It announced the program of the ceremony on the occasion of the entrance of the Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia of February 4 - 5, 1919, into the city. It is worth mentioning that in this proclamation the city was called Prešporok (three times including the title), and no mention was made of Bratislava.

The program reads: “[...] We order that on all the private houses which face the course of the parade, that is, ulica Štefanská [Štefan Street]<sup>27</sup>, ulica arci-

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26 Slovenský národný archív [The Slovak National Archives], Bratislava, Vavro Šrobár, osobný fond, Inv. č.: 594, číslo škatule: 8.; HORVÁTH, Vladimír, RÁKOŠ, Elemír, WATZKA, Jozef (ed.): *Bratislava, hlavné mesto Slovenska. Pripojenie Bratislavy k Československej republike roku 1918-1919. Dokumenty* [Bratislava, the Capital City of Slovakia. Incorporation of Bratislava to the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918-1919. Documents]. Bratislava 1977, pp. 237-238.

27 1885 [1886/87]: Stefánia út [Stefánia road, H (= Hungarian)], 1887: Stephanie-estrasse [Stephanie Street, G (= German)] → 1921 [1919?]: Štefánikova ulica/cesta [Štefánik Street/Road, S (= Slovak)] → 1950 (?): Obrancov mieru [Street of the Defenders of Peace, S] → 1968: ulica generála M. R. Štefánika [General M. R. Štefánik Street, S] → 1973: again Obrancov mieru → 1990 (?): again Štefánikova ulica. The sources of the data of the change of place names in Bratislava are: HORVÁTH, Vladimír: *Bratislavský topografický lexikon* [The Topographic Lexicon of Bratislava]. Bratislava 1990, and *Kartotéka ulíc, stav k r. 1945* [The Card Index of Streets, the condition to 1945], Archív hlavného mesta SR Bratislavy [Archive of the Capital City of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava]. Data for notes no. 28, 29, 30, 31, 33 and 34 are also derived from these sources. Stephanie von Belgien (1864-

kniežata Fridricha [Archduke Friedrich Street]<sup>28</sup>, námestie Ladislava Veľkého [Ladislav the Great Square]<sup>29</sup>, námestie cisára Vilhelma II. [Emperor Wilhelm the Second Square]<sup>30</sup>, and ulica Gabriela Barošša [Gabriel Barošš Street]<sup>31</sup>, suitable flags should fly.”

We read in this proclamation other names of public places such as “stanica” [railway station], “stoličný dom” [district hall], “budova československého ministerstva” [building of the Czechoslovak Ministry]<sup>32</sup>, “námestie pred divadlom” [square in front of the theater]<sup>33</sup>, “divadlo” [theater], “Reduta”, “ulica Halászka-

1945) was a Belgian princess and a wife of the Habsburg’s crown prince Rudolf (1858-1889), son of Emperor Franz Joseph and Empress Elizabeth.

28 1883: Erzherzog Friedrichstrasse [Archduke Friedrich Street, G], Frigyes főherceg út [Archduke Frigyes Road, H], 1896: Erzherzog Friedrich-Strasse [Archduke Friedrich Street, G] → 1920: ulica arcikniežaťa Fridricha [Archduke Fridrich Street, S] → Suché mýto [Dry Customs, S]. Archduke Friedrich (1856-1936) was a member of the House of Habsburg and the Supreme Commander of the Austro-Hungarian Army during the First World War. He lived at that time in the Grasalkovich Palace (today the residence of the President of the Slovak Republic).

29 1879: König Ludwig-Platz [King Ludwig Square, G], Nagy-Lajos tér [Lajos the Great Square, H] → 1920: námestie Ľudovíta Veľkého [Ľudovít the Great Square, S] → Hurbanovo námestie [Hurban Square, S]. Ľudovít Veľký (1326-1382) was King of Hungary, Croatia and Poland. In the proclamation his name was written by mistake as “Ladislav Veľký” (1040-1095).

30 1879: Marktplatz [Market Square, G], Vásártér [Market Square, H] → 1915/16: császár II. Vilém-tér / II. Vilmos Császár tér [Emperor Vilém/Vilmos the Second Square, H] → 1921 [1919/20]: námestie Republiky [Republic Square, S] → 1925: námestie pred Milosrdnými [Square in front of the Church of the Charity Brothers, S] → 1938: Hlinkovo námestie / námestie Andreja Hlinku [(Andrej) Hlinka Square, S] → 1945: Stalinovo námestie [Stalin Square, S] → 1962: námestie Slovenského národného povstania [Square of the Slovak National Uprising, S].

31 1891: Baross Gábor-Strasse [Baross Gábor Road, G], Baross Gábor út [Baross Gábor Road, H] → 1920: Šrobárova [Šrobár Street?, S], Štúrova ulica [Štúr Street, S]. Gábor Baross (1848-1892) was a Hungarian Minister of Commerce and Transport and the initiator of the construction of the first bridge over the Danube in the city (Ferenc József [Franz Joseph] Bridge, now the reconstructed Starý most [Old Bridge]).

32 At present the building of the Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Komenského [Faculty of Arts at Comenius University] on Gondova [Gonda Street] 70/2.

33 1850: Radetsky-Platz [Radetsky Square, G], → 1879 [1870?]: Promenadeplatz [Promenade Square, G], Sétatér [Promenade Square, H], → 1899: Kossuth La-



pu (Rybárska brána)” [Fisher’s Gate]<sup>34</sup>, “mestský úrad” [town office]. It is worth mentioning that almost all subjects are expressed as common nouns except Reduta and Halászkapu. Interestingly enough, Reduta is still called Reduta today.

Half a year later, on June 29, 1919, the head of the Bratislava district at the time, Samuel Zoch,<sup>35</sup> issued *Nariadenie* [Decree] which begins with the following sentences: “On the basis of the Decree of the Ministry Plenipotentiary of Slovakia, of June 24, No. 3285, I [Samuel Zoch] determine as follows:

1. All names of streets, squares, gardens, public and private enterprises based on names of the members of the former Habsburg Dynasty, the names of royal families of hostile countries, and on the names of all those who are hostile to the Czechoslovak Nation, are forbidden. Names based on actions and incidents expressing contempt toward the Czechoslovak Nation are also forbidden.

All these names must be immediately renamed by detailed arrangements done by the proper offices and changes must be immediately proposed to the district offices for approval. ... / Bratislava, June 29, 1919. / Samuel Zoch, Head of the district and governmental officer”<sup>36</sup>.

Next year, on April 14, 1920, *Zákon o názvech měst, obcí, osad a ulic, jakož i označování obcí místními tabulkami a číslování domů* [Act on the Names of Cities, Villages, Settlements and Streets and of the Indication of Municipalities

jos-Platz [Kossuth Lajos Square, G], Kossuth Lajos tér [Kossuth Lajos Square, H], 1920: Kossuthovo námestie [Kossuth Square, S] → 1920: Palackého námestie [Palacký Square, S], 1921: Palackého sady [Palacký Garden, S] → 1930: Hviezdoslavovo námestie [Hviezdoslav Square, S].

34 1880 [1879?]: Fischerthorgasse [Fisher’s Gate Street, G], Halászkapu utca [Fisher’s Gate Street, H] (first official name) → 1921 (?), 1925: Rybárska brána [Fisher’s Gate, S]. This street was demolished at the end of the 1960s in order to construct the second bridge over the Danube (most Slovenského národného povstania [Bridge of the Slovak National Uprising]).

35 Samuel Zoch (1882-1928), Slovak Lutheran priest and politician. Zoch studied theology in Vienna. From 1907 to 1928, he served as a priest of the Lutheran Church in the city of Modra near Bratislava. He was active in the Slovak national movement and was one of the signers of the Declaration of the Slovak Nation, the so-called Martin Declaration, on October 30, 1918. At that time, in 1919, he was Head of the Bratislava District. From 1922, Zoch served as the Bishop of the Western diocese of the Lutheran Church. In 1925-1928 he was a member of the National Assembly of the Agrarian Party.

36 For the entire text and data of *Nariadenie*, see Appendix 1 at the end of this article.

by Local Nameplate and of the Numbering of Houses] was issued. In paragraph 7 of this Act, which provided “the names of streets and public places”, we find the following sentences: “The present names of streets and public places which do not harmonize with the history and foreign relations of the Czechoslovak Nation, especially names that remember persons who expressed antagonistic views toward the Czechoslovak Nation or the Allied Nations, or which remember incidents of treasonable character are not allowed. / The municipalities are given one month from the day when this Act goes into effect to completely remove unsuitable names, their outdoor indications and notify new names to subordinate political offices”.<sup>37</sup>

On the same day, April 14, 1920, *Zákon o odstranění nevhodných názvů* [Act on Removal of Unsuitable Names] was published. The first paragraph says: “To indicate publicly any kind of groups, legal persons, societies, public places, factories, institutions, products and etc., by names, which remember the constitutional situations of the territories of the Czechoslovak Republic before October 28, 1918 [the day of the declaration of the Czechoslovak State], or which oppose the direction and spirit of the international relations of the Czechoslovak Republic, or which remember persons who in any way expressed hostile views against the Czechoslovak Nation, or the Allied Nations, or which remember incidents of treasonable character, are not allowed. Also names, which misuse the sign of “československý” [Czechoslovak], or the unacceptable use or renaming of the names of people who rendered remarkable services to the Czechoslovak Nation or to the Allied Nations, are not allowed”.<sup>38</sup>

According to these definitions, how can the above-mentioned place names in the proclamation be judged? The Austro-Hungarian Archduke Friedrich un-

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37 *Sbírka zákonů a nařízení státu československého* [The Collection of Laws and Orders of the Czechoslovak State], 1920. Prague 1920, p. 595. This act provides among others, “the names of cities, villages, and settlements” decided by the Ministry of the Interior with assistance from the special council boards, keeping in mind public interests (paragraph 1); the names of the streets will be resolved by the municipality board (paragraph 10); use of languages by operation of this Act is processed by decrees (paragraph 22); the Hungarian legislative No. IV of 1898 and all legislative laws and rules which oppose this Act are cancelled (paragraph 24). *Ibid.*, pp. 595-596.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 597.

doubtedly belongs to “the members of the former Habsburg Dynasty”. Princess Stefania whose husband Rudolf killed himself with his lover belongs to the same category. German Emperor Wilhelm the Second belongs to “the names of royal families of hostile countries”. However, how about the Hungarian king Ludovít (Lajos) the Great from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century (or Ladislav (László) the Great from the 11<sup>th</sup> Century)? Do they “remember incidents of treasonable character”? How about Gabriel Barošš who made a contribution to the first bridge over the Danube in the city?

On which level were these renamed names judged and what kind of arguments were presented? What were the reactions to these marginal changes made in the everyday lives of German, Hungarian and Slovak citizens? We still have numerous topics to cover that concern the renaming process of Bratislava.

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### **Appendix 1. The Decree of the Head of the District and Governmental Officer, Samuel Zoch, of June 29, 1919<sup>39</sup>**

Decree:

On the basis of the Decree of the Ministry Plenipotentiary of Slovakia of June 24, No. 3285, I [Samuel Zoch] determine as follows:

1. All names of streets, squares, gardens, public and private enterprises based on names of the members of the former Habsburg Dynasty, the names of royal families of hostile countries, and on the names of all those who are hostile to the Czechoslovak Nation, are forbidden. Names based on actions and incidents expressing contempt toward the Czechoslovak Nation are also forbidden.

All these names must be immediately renamed by detailed arrangements done by the proper offices and changes must be immediately proposed to the district offices for approval.

2. All private and public enterprises, which have in their names some element connected to former Hungary or Austria, must eliminate them from the names and change them in order to match today’s constitutional situation. They have to immediately notify this to the district office.

3. All boards, signs of firms, etc., whether public or private, must be writ-

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<sup>39</sup> Slovenský národný archív, Bratislava, Samuel Zoch, osobný fond, zväzok X, Županské obdobie, 2. časť, Dokumenty.

ten also in Slovak on the condition that Slovak is located in the first place and the font of signs in foreign languages should not be bigger than the Slovak ones. Private enterprises (without the joint-stock companies and cooperatives) in the municipalities with populations smaller than 4000 that are exclusively Hungarian or exclusively German should not have signs in Slovak. In municipalities where the official language is, according to my decree of April 25 [illegible - S. N.], 1919, exclusively Slovak, boards and signs in foreign languages are forbidden.

At this point, declared changes of signs have to be carried out, so that until July 30, every sign and board must be in their temporary conditions supplemented by Slovak text, and permanent and regular renaming of boards and signs carried out until August 31 of next year [1920].

In order that Slovak text in signs be correct, everyone is obligated to submit it before use for checking, in Bratislava, to the translation department of the City Hall, from the [Bratislava] district, to the District Office in Bratislava. Those who miss the checking process and whose hanged signs are incorrect, will be obliged at the request of the authorities to hand them over for inspection.

4. I will control the operation of this decree very strictly and those, who do not comply with the decree, will be allowed to use the signs on their own responsibility and they will be prosecuted as offenders.

Bratislava, June 29, 1919

Samuel Zoch, Head of the district and governmental officer

## **Appendix 2. An Answer of the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of November 2, 1922<sup>40</sup>**

The Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the Austrian consul in Bratislava uses for the

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40 Ministerstvo vnitra, č. 71036/1922, Datum 9. 9. 1922, č. 132580/III-2, Došlo 14. 9. od ministerstva zahraničních věcí., Oddělení 14, Předmět: Bratislava, úřední název města. [The Ministry of the Interior, No. 71036/1922, date September 9, 1922, No. 132580/III-2, received on September 14, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, section 14, Item: Bratislava, the Official Name of the City.] Národní archiv [The National Archives] (Prague), Ministerstvo vnitra - stará registratura [Ministry of the Interior - the Old Registry Office]. kartón 586, Spisovna. 1919-1924. Oddělení spisovny 21, číslo 252, podčíslo 1.

indication of his office and in his official correspondence to the Ministry the name Pressburg. The Ministry Plenipotentiary asks the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to remind the consul the unsuitability of his deed.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks your [the Ministry of the Interior's] opinion.

To judge the problem whether the name Bratislava was introduced validly and whether it is the exclusive official name, it is necessary to summarize the following:

The motion to provide the Czechoslovak name for the city Pressburg was offered by the Ministry of the National Defense which asked by the request of February 10, 1919, to the Presidium of the Ministerial Council, in consideration of the situation that there are several names [for the city] such as Wilsonov, Wilsonovo Město, and Bratislav, to decide which name is to be used officially. The Presidium of the Ministerial Council sent this request [of the Ministry of the National Defense] to the Ministry of the Interior for their opinion, however, they [the Presidium] did not wait for the answer and already at the meeting of the Ministerial Council of February 19, 1919, it was decided “for the indication of the city Pressburk to use officially the name Bratislav”.<sup>41</sup> As a result the Ministry of the Interior published the decree of March 3, 1919, No. 6452 to local political administrations in Prague, Brno and Opava with the same contents as the above-mentioned decree of the Ministerial Council. By additional decrees of the Presidium of the Ministerial Council of March 16, 1919, No. 4562 and of March 28, 1919, No. 9725 the name Bratislav was corrected to “Bratislava”<sup>42</sup>. The decree of the Ministerial Council was published in an unofficial part of the newspaper “*Pražské noviny*” [Prague News]<sup>43</sup> and also in *Věstník Ministerstva vnitra*

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41 This summary makes no mention about the decision of the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia (V. Šrobár) at the governmental meeting in “Bratislava” on February 14, 1919. See NAGAYO, Susumu: When did Bratislava become Bratislava?, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.

42 The “claim” of V. Šrobár on March 13 is also neglected. See *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

43 This is a misunderstanding. The newspaper was published on February 16, 1919, and the article is related to the decision of V. Šrobár at a governmental meeting held on February 14. See *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

[Bulletin of the Ministry of the Interior].

The Ministry Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia published to all heads of the district and governmental officers a circular letter according to which “as the official names of cities with the district office only the Slovak version is announced. These names of cities are untranslatable. Please notify this to your subordinate offices, post offices, railway stations and other offices in the district and publish it in the official bulletins of the district”. / Bratislava, October, 23, 1919, No. 8449.<sup>44</sup>

At the time, when the above-mentioned decrees of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry Plenipotentiary [for the Administration of Slovakia] were published, the Hungarian legislative law No. IV of 1898 was still in force, according to which, as for the change of the official name, the matter would be fixed by the Minister of the Interior after listening to the relevant municipality and its general assembly (although the municipality [of the city of Bratislava] was not listened to they [the municipality] did not complain about the decree). According to [Hungarian] law, a municipality can have only one official name. Although the Ministry of the Interior does not have a list of the official names from the Hungarian era, there is no doubt that its one official name was not the German Pressburg, but probably the Hungarian Poszony [sic]. The Hungarian law did not request a publication of the given changes. The above-mentioned decree of the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia also has meaning for the review of this problem, because we can see in it the measures to which he [the Minister for the Administration of Slovakia] was empowered based on the full powers according to paragraph 14 of the act of December 10, 1918, No. 64 of the Collection of Laws and Orders [of the Czechoslovak State].<sup>45</sup>

Finally on April 14, 1920, as Act No. 266 of the Collection of Laws and Orders, the Act on the names of municipalities and settlements<sup>46</sup> which is in force today was published. Whether, considering the provision of paragraph 2 of the order

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44 See this article, p. 2.

45 In this paragraph the Ministry of the Interior explains the legal process of the renaming the city. It seems that they are conscious of the “extraordinary character” of the renaming process of the city to Bratislava in February-March, 1919.

46 See notes no. 37 in this article.

of August 25, 1921, No. 324 of the Collection of Laws and Orders,<sup>47</sup> the name Bratislava can be further exclusively maintained or whether the official German and Hungarian names can also be provided, will be decided on the occasion of the review.<sup>48</sup>

Item from above. To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. / To No.132580/III-2 of September 9, 1922, in Prague.

To the above-mentioned instruction, the Ministry of the Interior transmits that it was resolved in the Ministerial Council of February 19, 1919, to use the name Bratislava for the city Prešpurk officially.<sup>49</sup> As a result, the Ministry of the Interior published the decree of March 28, 1919, No. 9725 with the same contents as the above-mentioned resolution of the Ministerial Council. The decree of the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia of October 23, 1919, No. 8449, provided that as the official name of the cities with the district office, only the Slovak version is announced and that the names of these cities are untranslatable (including Bratislava). According to the provision in paragraph 4 of the law of April 14, 1920, No. 266, of the Collection of Laws and Orders, the official names must be used by all courts, state and public offices, organs, institutes and enterprises, and also in correspondences with them. Paragraph 4 of the governmental decree of August 25, 1921, No 324, of the Collection of Laws and Orders has a provision describing how to deal with submitted documents in which names other than the official one are used.

In Prague, November 2, 1922

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47 Nařízení vlády republiky Československé ze dne 25. srpna 1921. In: *Sbírka zákonů a nařízení státu československého* [The Collection of Laws and Orders of the Czechoslovak State], 1921. Prague 1921, pp. 1310-1312.

48 It is not known whether such a review operated or not.

49 On February 19, 1919, the Ministerial Council decided that the name of the city is Bratislav (not Bratislava). See NAGAYO, Susumu: When did Bratislava become Bratislava?, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

**Appendix 3. “Pozsony, szab[ad]. kir[ályi]. város térképe [Map of the Free Royal City of Pozsony]” from the Hungarian guidebook “Képes Pozsonyi Kalauz [The Pictorial Guidebook of Pozsony]” published probably in 1907.**

Let us follow the course of the parade of the delegation of the Czechoslovak government on February 4, 1919. According to the Program<sup>50</sup> the delegation arrived at the railway station (just under the sign of “Pozsony, ...”, numbered 72) → Stefánia-út [Štefánikova ulica] → Frigyes főh[erceg]-út [Suché mýto] → N[agy]-Lajos tér [Hurbanovo námestie] → district hall (numbered 29) → Vásártér [námestie Slovenského národného povstania] → Baross Gábor út [Štúrova ulica] → the building of the Czechoslovak ministry [the building of the Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Komenského, numbered 85].

In the afternoon of the day and on the next day (February 5) they organized concerts on Kossuth Lajos tér [Hviezdoslavovo námestie] and inside the building Reduta. They also presented in Városiínház [the town theater, today the Slovenské národné divadlo [the Slovak National Theater], numbered 38] Bedřich Smetana’s operas “The Bartered Bride” (February 4) and “Dalibor” (February 5).

There are small changes in the architectural structure in the central part of the city. It is easy to follow the course of the parade even today.

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50 See notes no. 27 in this article.



