DOI: 10.30816/ICONN6/2023/21

Recent changes to Budapest street names[1]

Andrea Bölcskei
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Abstract: This paper briefly overviews historical street naming patterns in Hungary's capital. It emphasises chronological peculiarities, characteristic name types, typical changes in street names, and the role authorities have played in naming streets since 1873. As a pivotal consideration, a comprehensive analysis is provided in connection with street naming and renaming in the Hungarian capital in the last two decades. From this viewpoint, influential factors include political ideology, historical authenticity, representativeness, and – to a lesser degree – onomastic adequacy. Name users' attitudes towards the (in)correctness of recent Budapest street name changes are also explored.
Keywords: street names, Budapest, name changes, urban space, onomastic landscape.

1. Introduction: Street names as salient components of the urban linguistic landscape

Street and square names assist us in our spatial orientation and play a significant administrative role. In addition, they also reflect the past, influence collective memories, bring values aligned with current political and social trends to the fore, and shape identity. Their visibility and versatile functionality are conspicuous, especially in an urban context. No wonder diverse specialists are interested in their relevance. Multi-layered names for public spaces are observed from specific viewpoints, for instance, in (social) geographic, cartographic, (geo)political, cultural heritage, urban planning, linguistic landscape and toponomastic studies. Eventually, these multifaceted research results contribute to developing a productive cross-disciplinary approach to hodonymic analysis.

Since the advent of Critical Toponomastics in the early 1990s, exploring the political backgrounds of street naming has become a major issue in research (cf. Rose-Redwood et al. 2010, 2018). Commemorative street naming particularly provides a firm ground for investigating how the political elite and the local authorities manipulate the urban streetscape to substitute the ideology of the previous regime with that of their own. As Maoz Azaryahu (2012: 74), the outstanding expert in the field explains: "In democratic societies public debates over who is eligible to be

[1] Work on this paper was supported by a research grant obtained from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary (*Place Names as Cultural Values,* id. no.: 20705B800).

commemorated in the public domain articulate a struggle over moral values and ideological orientation". In his views, commemorative street naming is "a feature of political culture that transcends political regimes and ideological orientations" (Azaryahu 2011: 30). Apart from political meaning, commemorative street names in everyday use also "accumulate meanings that have no necessary relationship with the political rationale underlying the naming or later opposition to the name" (Azaryahu 2011: 31). Thus, naming commissions and name users play an equally important role in construing the true meaning of such hodonyms. When commemorative street names are concerned, the relationship between the thoroughfares and their names is often arbitrary and these names gain their legitimacy from the "external" political sphere. As descriptive and neutral street names are usually rooted in local history or in the contemporary urban landscape, they are relatively stable; commemorative names, however, are strongly dependent on the political climate and, as a result, they are highly susceptible to changes.

Articles about (re)naming public spaces in Budapest usually include topics such as the chronology of street name types (Schmall 1906: 25–64; Ráday 2013: 12–20); the synchronic typology of street names (Hajdú 1975); the ideological background and politics of street names, as well as their commemorative value (T. Somogyi 2009; Havas 2006, 2008; Baroch 2019); the discursive meaning of public space names when reading the city-text (Palonen 2018); personal and generational attachment to street and square names (Szívós 2021). Similar issues are also addressed concerning several towns in East-Central Europe, focusing primarily on their post-socialist history (David 2013; Erőss 2017; Felecan 2015, 2020, 2023; Felecan and Felecan 2021; Bitušíková 2022).

2. Historical background

Relevant literature identifies distinct periods as regards street name history within the confines of modern Budapest: 1) the period before 1541, the Ottoman occupation of Buda; 2) the era of the Ottoman occupation; 3) approximately two centuries from the 1686 reconquest of Buda from the Ottomans by the Holy League to the 1873 unification of Buda, Óbuda, and Pest under the name of Budapest; 4) the years from 1873 to the end of World War I; 5) the period between the two world wars and the years of World War II; 6) the era from 1945 to the 1989–1990 change of regime and 7) the more than three decades from 1989–1990 to the present day (cf. Schmall 1906: 25–64; T. Somogyi 2009; Ráday 2013: 12–20; Baroch 2019: 147–148; Szívós 2021: 200).

In the earliest periods, streets were usually named spontaneously after significant public buildings, such as schools, the town hall, baths, merchants' shops or pharmacies; characteristic features, functions or situations, such as *Szűk utca* ('Narrow Street'), *Búza piac* ('Wheat Market'), *Középső utca* ('Middle Street'); the direction to well-known settlements, such as *Ceglédi utca* ('Street to the Town of Cegléd'); church dedications, such as *Szent Péter utca* ('Saint Peter Street'); ethnic minorities, craftsmen,

respected individuals living on the street, such as *Francia utca* ('French Street'), *Ötvös utca* ('Goldsmith Street'). Names usually reflected a naturally striking feature of the streets. Thus, if the feature or the dwellers changed, it could also involve street name change. Turkish street names introduced during the Ottoman era were similar in type but ephemeral in life span. These names disappeared with the withdrawal of the Ottomans, such as *Orta dzsámi mejdáni* ('Middle Mosque Square'), *Mahmud pasa kuleszi* ('Mahmud Pasha's Bastion') (Schmall 1906: 25–32; Ráday 2013: 12–13; Takács 2016: 20; examples are taken from Schmall 1906: 28, 29, 29, 28, 27, 27, 28, 29 and Ráday 2013: 197, 401, respectively).

Street names derived from the Christian names or family names of rulers, aristocrats or well-to-do citizens became fashionable in the third period, such as *József tér* ('Joseph Square', after Archduke Joseph Anton of Austria), *Koháry köz* ('Koháry Lane', after the mansion of Count István Koháry on the street), *Rombach utca* ('Rombach Street', after Sebestyén Rumbach, a physician, who lived in the thoroughfare). However, streets named after historically significant people were rare at that time. Inns, pubs as well as industrial buildings and centres for service providers often gave their names to streets, such as *Angol utca* ('English Street') after the "Inn to the King of England" (today's *Király utca* 'King Street'); *Légszesz utca* ('Lighting Gas Street'), after the gas plant there; *Gyorskocsi utca* ('Stageoach Street'), after the terminal of Buda–Vienna mail coaches on the street. As most citizens were native German speakers and German was the administrative language, street names in Pest-Buda (the contemporary name variant for the Hungarian capital) often appeared in German on street signs. However, they also existed in translation in the Hungarian vernacular. Several streets had two or more name variants in use. In 1870, representatives decided on the establishment of the Budapest Council of Public Works (Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsa), which became responsible for naming streets in the capital (Schmall 1906: 33–67; László 2020; Wágner 2022; examples are taken from Schmall 1906: 35, 35, 37, Ráday 2013: 13–14, respectively).

Street names based on these characteristics started to dwindle during the fourth period, from 1873 to the end of World War I. However, hodonyms commemorating significant national and local figures became fashionable. The Budapest Council of Public Works embarked on eliminating identical street names – resulting from the merge of the formerly independent settlements of Buda, Óbuda and Pest into one city, Budapest in 1873 – for example, by adopting synonyms, such as *Kaszárnya utca* → *Laktanya utca* (both 'Barracks Street'), *Ispotály utca* → *Ápolda utca* (both 'Hospital Street'). Numerals were erased from street names derived from inn signs, such as *Három Dob utca* ('Three Drums Street') → *Dob utca* ('Drum Street'). Hungarian name forms became generally accepted on street signs (Schmall 1906: 47–64, 105–112; Ráday 2013: 14; László 2021; examples are taken from Schmall 1906: 50, 130, 52, respectively).

The Interwar Period was characterised by the advance of clerical references, such as *c*1900: *Imre utca* > *c*1930: *Szent Imre utca* (after Saint Emeric of Hungary); and by the adoption of contemporary political allusions in street names, such as 1874: *Fehérvári út*

(cf. [Székes]fehérvár, a royal residence and mediaeval coronation city) > 1921: *Horthy Miklós út* (after the Regent of Hungary). Several streets in Budapest were (re)named to commemorate geographical features and historic settlements located beyond the new constricted borders of the country, such as 1874: *Köztemető út* ('Public Cemetery Street') > 1923: *Fiumei út* (cf. Fiume, the formerly important seaport of Hungary; today: Rijeka, Croatia), 1940: *Nagyvárad tér* (cf. today's Oradea, Romania), along Üllői út (T. Somogyi 2009; Flier 2021; examples are taken from Ráday 2013: 546, 225, 233, 434, 578, 642, 273, 563, 482, 346, respectively).

The period from 1945 to the 1989–1990 change of regime saw the disappearance of street names considered politically incorrect according to Soviet ideology. The element *szent* 'saint' was erased from street names, regardless of its function, such as 1936: *Szent Orbán tér* > 1953: *Orbán tér* (after Saint Urban, the patron saint of viticulture), but also 1934: *Mindszent utca* (i.e., 'All Saints') > 1953: *Mimóza utca* ('Mimosa Street'). New style street names propagated socialist values, such as 1945: *Lehel tér* (a Hungarian chieftain around 950) > 1951: *Élmunkás tér* ('Model Worker Square'), 1921: *Apponyi tér* (after Albert Apponyi, a contemporary aristocrat) > 1953: *Felszabadulás tér* ('Liberty Square'); iconic dates in communist history, such as the 1920s: *Oktogon* ('Octagon', from the shape of the square) > 1950: *November 7. tér* ('7 November Square', the former Memorial Day of the Great October Socialist Revolution). In 1950, 7 towns and 16 villages surrounding the capital were attached to Budapest as its new districts, resulting in identical street names, which had to be harmonised by the Executive Committee of Budapest Municipal Council, then the responsible authority. Decisions at that time were based on thorough preparatory work by street name experts, including representatives from relevant professional bodies (archives, museums and linguistic institutions) (T. Somogyi 2009; examples are taken from Ráday 2013: 551, 419, 384, 230, 448, respectively).

From 1989 to the Millennium, the primary trend was eliminating street names referring to persons, events, and ideas connected to the Socialist Era. These names were either substituted by (one of) the pre–1945 street names, such as 1874: *Király utca* ('King Street', see above) > 1950: *Majakovszkij utca* (after Vladimir Mayakovsky, poet and playwright) > 1990: *Király utca;* or by a new name considered appropriate, such as 1914: *Berlini tér* ('Berlin Square') > 1945: *Marx tér* ('Marx Square', after Karl Marx, the political theorist) > 1992: *Nyugati tér* ('Western Square', after Budapest-Nyugati Railway Terminal). Names deprived of their *szent* ('saint') element were restored, such as 1938: *Szent Adalbert tér* ('Saint Adalbert of Prague Square') > 1953: *Kilátó tér* ('Lookout Square') > 1999: *Szent Adalbert tér*. Some politically neutral street names were also changed for historical reasons, such as 1879: *Kard utca* ('Sword Street', in Buda Castle) > 1968: *Hatvany Lajos utca* (after Lajos Hatvany, a 20th-century literary scholar) > 1990: *Kard utca* (to commemorate castle battles) (T. Somogyi 2009; Ráday 2013: 9; Takács 2016: 24; Flier 2021; examples are taken from Ráday 2013: 345, 391–392, 445, 281, 543, 326, respectively).

3. Recent names for public spaces in Budapest and public reactions on their (in)correctness

Below, first, fundamental legislation concerning the naming of Budapest public spaces is reviewed. Several recently adopted or changed street and square names are discussed chronologically.

3.1. Legal issues

Currently, "Decree of 94/2012. (XII.27.) of the Budapest General Assembly on establishing the names for public spaces"[2] constitutes the legal background for giving and changing street names in the capital of Hungary. The decree claims that all areas in public use possessed by the state or the local government must be named. The Budapest General Assembly has the authority to decide on all names for streets, squares, and other public spaces in Budapest (bridges are exceptions). Names for public spaces consist of a specifier and a generic element. Numbers, dates, and existing names should be avoided in new names. In practice, new street and square names and name changes can be initiated by anyone (e.g., any individual, a group of people, or a district board). Proposals must be handed to the Local or Municipal Council. The Mayor of Budapest asks for the opinion of the responsible Local Council and, if relevant, the Ethnic Minority Self-governing Body. If they support the proposal, it is discussed by the General Assembly. If the General Assembly accepts the proposal, it is communicated to the local authorities, and to bring it into force, the decision is published in "Budapest Gazette". A new, accepted street name cannot be changed within 15 years. Names reflecting local history (if not connected to persons) are protected and cannot be changed (Decree of 94/2012. (XII.27.); Ráday 2013: 7, 10; Takács 2016: 18–19; Baroch 2019: 148). As the "Act CLXVII of 2012 (XI.23.)" §4 states, street names associated with 20th-century totalitarian political regimes are prohibited in Hungary. In case of doubt, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences provides a statement of opinion. According to legislation, a person can be commemorated in names for public areas if he or she passed away at least five years ago (Act CLXVII of 2012; Ráday 2013: 15; Takács 2016: 19, 24).

3.2. A short survey of 21st-century street name changes in Budapest

Budapest has approximately 8250 public areas; most are linear features, and only a few are point objects. According to an estimation, the names for at least 3360 public spaces were changed once or several times in the past, resulting in some 5600 name changes in the Hungarian capital (Takács 2016: 16). The present short survey focuses on changes that took place in the 2000s and gained considerable publicity on the Internet.

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[2] Last amended on 14 November 2018.

3.2.1. 2000–2010

At the beginning of the new Millennium, street name changes were primarily motivated by commemorating the victims of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 instead of the heroes and values of the previous era, such as *c*1970: *Világifjúsági park* ('World Youth Park') > 2008: *Mansfeld Péter park* (an emblematic figure of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution; II[3]) and by honouring church leaders, such as 0[4] > 2007*: Mindszenty József bíboros tér* (J. Mindszenty, Archbishop of Esztergom between 1945 and 1973; XII). Increasing diversity could also explain some changes from ordinary to more specific names, such as *Temető utca* ('Cemetery Street') > 2008: *Göcsej utca* (a geographic region in Western Hungary; XVII). New streets, especially in the vicinity of one another, could get their names from historic settlements that formerly belonged to Hungary, such as *Székelyszenttamás utca* (today's Tămaşu, Romania; IV) (Flier 2021; examples are taken from Ráday 2013: 361, 403, 255, 540, respectively).

In 2000, *Budai alsó rakpart* ('Lower Buda Embankment') and *Pesti alsó rakpart* ('Lower Pest Embankment'), the popular informal descriptive terms for the lower banks of the River Danube on each side became official road names. Ten years later, both banks were divided into sections and given honorific names. The commemorated persons played an active part in rescuing persecuted Jewish people during World War II. The sections of the former *Budai alsó rakpart* from north to south became known as *Gr. Esterházy János rakpart, Slachta Margit rakpart, Angelo Rotta rakpart, Sztehlo Gábor rakpart, Friedrich Born rakpart, Raoul Wallenberg rakpart, Valdemar és Nina Langlet rakpart,* complemented with *Henryk Slawik rakpart* in 2015; the former *Pesti alsó rakpart* was divided into *Carl Lutz rakpart, Id. Antall József rakpart, Jane Haining rakpart* and *Salkaházi Sára rakpart.* This was an unconventional approach to street naming in the Hungarian capital, thus not universally appreciated by many citizens. Firstly, the commemorated persons were little known by the public. An additional difficulty was that some of these names were also unusual in their forms. They include coordination (cf. *és* 'and') or a noble title no longer in use (cf. *gróf* 'count'; see above). Moreover, the functionality of these street names is also dubious, as they identify parts of contiguous traffic routes. Furthermore, the embankments were divided into sections somewhat arbitrarily, so the exact references of the names must be memorised. Until now, several journals and websites have devoted articles to educating people about these names (ingatlanmenedzser.hu 2010; Rátonyi 2017; növekedés.hu 2019; Wágner 2019; examples are taken from Ráday 2013: 164, 471, 217, 518, 109, 565, 240, 492, 608, 168, 111, 308, 508, respectively).

3.2.2. 2011–2020

2011 brought a new wave of (re)naming streets in Budapest. As a result, 28 new names were included in the Budapest public space name stock. The new street names commemorate historically significant persons and families, such as 1953: *Tanácsház*

[3] Budapest districts are conventionally identified by Roman numbers.

[4] 0 = no previous name for the public space.

utca > 2011: *Károli Gáspár utca* (16th-century Calvinist pastor and Bible translator; XXI), 1948: *Sallai Imre utca* > 2011: *Rudnyánszky utca* (a Hungarian aristocratic family; XXII); anti-communist activists, such as 1879: *Erdélyi utca* > 2011: *Bauer Sándor utca* (a martyr of the communist regime; VIII); honorary citizens, such as 1945: *Bajcsy-Zsilinszky tér* > 2011: *Tabódy Ida tér* (a 20th-century teacher and educational organiser; XVI); poets, writers, such as 1991: *Pákozd tér* > 2011: *Wass Albert tér* (a 20th-century emigrant novelist of controversial reputation; XIV); theatre persons, such as 1948: *Zalka Máté utca* > 2011: *Simándy József utca* (a 20th-century opera singer; XXII); sculptors, such as 0 > 2011: *Zala György utca* (a late 19th–early 20th-century public sculptor; XV); members of the Hungarian national football team of the 1950s, such as the 1950s: *Nagybátonyi út* > 2011: *Hidegkuti Nándor utca* (a forward/attacking midfielder; III). The discarded street names, if there was any, either had references to persons in association with the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic and the illegal communist movement, e.g., Imre Sallai, Máté Zalka (NB Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, the founder of the Hungarian National Radical Party in 1930, however, was not a communist leader); or contained simple descriptive or locative terms, e.g., *tanácsház* ('council house'), *erdélyi* ('Transylvanian'), *Pákozd* (a settlement in Transdanubia), *Nagybátony* (a settlement, today a part of Bátonyterenye in Nógrád County) (Napi.hu 2011; 24.hu admin 2011; We love Budapest 2012; cf. also Ráday 2013: 328, 505, 141, 568, 634, 517, 638–639, 286, respectively).

Church dignitaries were also honoured in 2011 name changes, such as 1946: *Köztársaság tér* ('Republic Square', with allusions to the former Headquarters of the Hungarian Socialist Party) > 2011: *II. János Pál pápa tér* (after Pope John-Paul II, who visited Hungary in 1991 and in 1996; VIII). Judge Petermann, a 14th-century resident of Buda, however, who cursed the Pope as he supported Charles Robert to become the King of Hungary against most citizens of Buda, lost his commemoration in the Castle District: 1954: *Petermann bíró utca* > 2011: *Nándor utca* (from the former army post on the street named after Ferdinand I, Emperor of Austria between 1835 and 1848, also King of Hungary as Ferdinand V, *Nándor* is the Hungarian variant of *Ferdinand;* I) (cf. also Ráday 2013: 309, 435, respectively).

Two 2011 name changes provoked the disapproval of international diplomacy. As compensation for the name change of 1951: *Moszkva tér* ('Moscow Square') > 2011: *Széll Kálmán tér* (cf. 1929: *Széll Kálmán tér,* after the Prime Minister of Hungary from 1899 to 1903; II) for the busy public transport hub, a formerly nameless promenade was named after Lev Tolstoy, the Russian writer in the City Park: 2011: *Lev Tolsztoj sétány*. The change 1946: *Roosevelt tér* (after Franklin D. Roosevelt) > 2011: *Széchenyi István tér* (after the 19th-century Hungarian statesman, traditionally considered as "the Greatest of Hungarians"; V) was justified by the facts that the square is surrounded by the Chain Bridge and the building of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, both established by István Széchenyi. At the foot of Margaret Bridge on the Pest side, a park was named after Elvis Presley (2011: *Elvis Presley park;* II) as a reminder that the singer at a US television show called for charity to support the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

According to the survey by the political analysts of Policy Solutions, most residents of Budapest did not appreciate the 2011 name changes. The most unpopular decision was the change of *Moszkva tér* to *Széll Kálmán tér,* and even inventions such as *Elvis Presley park* and *Wass Albert tér* were supported only by 40% of the interviewees (Napi.hu 2011; cf. also Ráday 2013: 541, 388, 538, 210, 634, respectively).

Act CLXVII of 2012 (see above) created the foundation for further street name changes in the following year. Two street names were changed duly in the city centre: 1953: *Pesti Barnabás utca* (a member of the illegal communist movement) > 2012: *Piarista utca* ('Piarist Street', the Secondary School of the Piarist Fathers can be found on the street), 1964: *Károlyi Mihály utca* (the Prime Minister, then President of the First Hungarian Republic in 1918–1919) > 2012: *Károlyi utca* (the Hungarian aristocratic family, their palace, last owned by the above mentioned Mihály Károlyi, is on this street). However, two name changes on the outskirts caused misunderstandings, as they affected writers who – although leftish – had never been communists. The promenade 1978: *Tersánszky Józsi Jenő sétány* was renamed as 2012: *Somogyi László sétány* (XVIII), after the parish priest of Saint Ladislaus Church in Havanna residential complex, who passed away in 1993. The street 1946: *Gelléri Andor Endre utca* became 2012: *Regele János utca* (XVI), after János Regele, a late 19th–early 20th-century royal counsellor, who played an essential role in building the church on the street (cf. also Ráday 2013: 475–476, 521, 493, respectively).

In 2012, so far nameless public areas received the names of local or international church dignitaries, such as 0 > *Fischer Ágoston park* (a Catholic priest who established an orphanage in Óbuda in 1912; III), 0 > *Boldog Teréz anya tér* (the commemoration of Mother Teresa was initiated by the ambassador of Albania; XII); politicians, such as 0 > *Tisza István tér* (the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Hungary between 1903 and 1905 and between 1913 and 1917; XIV); 20th-century scientists, such as 0 > *Teller Ede út* (a Hungarian-American theoretical physicist; XXI); and artists, such as 0 > *Ruttkai Éva park* (a 20th-century actress; XIII), 0 > *Tarasz Sevcsenko tér* (a 19th-century Ukrainian poet, artist, whose commemoration was promoted by the Government of the Ukrainian Minority as his statue is standing in the square, II) (index.hu 2012; We love Budapest 2012; cf. also Ráday 2013: 232, 158, 584, 578, 506, 572, respectively).

In 2013, Tersánszky and Gelléri, the leftish writers who were deprived of street name commemoration in the previous year, returned to the Budapest street map: 1957: *Tégla utca* ('Brick Street', next to the former Óbuda Brickyard) > 2013: *Gelléri Andor Endre utca* (the writer spent most of his childhood in the Óbuda Brickyard vicinity; III), 1953: *Kisdobos köz* ('Pioneer Little Drummers' Lane') > 2013: *Tersánszky Józsi Jenő köz* (an arbitrarily chosen lane; XII). Long streets sections with protected names received independent designations, such as 1874: the western part of *Bérkocsis utca* ('Fiaker Street') > 2013: *Scheiber Sándor utca* (after the director of the Rabbinical Seminary on the street; VIII), 1900: a section of *Gyáli út* ('Street to the settlement of Gyál') in the vicinity of the Stadium of Ferencvárosi TC > 2013: *Albert Flórián út* (after the legendary footballer of Ferencvárosi TC; IX). A name was motivated by

mutual courtesy: 1974: *Vagon tér* ('Wagon Square'), near a yard of the Hungarian State Railways > 2013: *Tbiliszi tér* (a public area named after Budapest is said to be in the capital of Georgia; VIII). Traditional name types, such as 0 > 2013: *Fő tér* ('Main Square'; XVII), were also adopted (cf. also Ráday 2013: 249, 580, 512, 101–102, 575, 237, respectively)

Honorific names predominated new street names. They commemorate especially teachers, such as 1974: *Kollégium lépcső* ('College Stairs' to Eötvös József College of Excellence) > 2013: *Bartoniek Géza lépcső* (the first director of the College, appointed in 1897; IX); scholars, such as 1946: *Kulich Gyula utca* > 2013: *Orbán Balázs utca* (a 19th-century ethnographer; XVIII); citizens influential in local history, such as *Alsó Duna part* > 2013: *Forster János Jakab utca* (he settled Swabian immigrants into the unpopulated area of today's Soroksár in the 1700s; XXIII); artists, such as 1945: *Pataky István utca* > 2013: *Borics Pál utca* (a 20th-century sculptor; XVIII); and musicians, such as 0 > 2013: *Muzsikus cigányok parkja* ('Gypsy Musicians' Park', with plaques of famous Gypsy musicians on a memorial wall; VIII), 0 > 2013: *Radics Béla utca* (a rock musician; XIII). The substituted street names, if there were any, either referred to a communist politician, Gyula Kulich; an anti-Fascist resistant, István Pataky; or contained a descriptive term, *Alsó Duna-part* ('Lower Danube Embankment') (Vincze 2015; cf. also Ráday 2013: 138, 450, 236, 159, 426, 487, respectively).

The street names change from 1946: *Úttörő utca* ('Pioneer Street') to 2015: *Enzsöl Ellák utca* (a parish priest and cultural organiser in Rákoscsaba-Újtelep; XVII) sparked a public dispute on the Internet, because of the multiple meanings of the former name. Although the "Pioneer Movement" can undoubtedly be connected to the communist regime, the word *úttörő* ('pioneer') also has separate positive meanings attested from earlier periods: "a person who is one of the first people to do something", "a person who goes to an area and builds a house, begins a farm, etc." (cf. COD, entry *pioneer*), also in Hungarian. Today, for most young people, the children's organisation is unknown, and elderly people who experienced the atmosphere of pioneer summer camps often cherish nostalgic feelings towards these events. Citizens in Rákoscsaba were not against naming a street after the local parish priest but were reluctant to do so at the expense of a well-established street name (Rákóczi 2016: 21–23; cf. also Ráday 2013: 602).

At the end of the decade, complaints were made that – despite the legal background – there were still at least 30 names for public areas that commemorate second-rank Hungarian labour/social democratic/illegal communist movement activists in the capital, such as in 1984: *Arató Emil tér* (III), 1945: *Bacsó Béla utca* (VIII); but those honouring foreign supporters of socialism in Budapest street names were also disapproved of, such as 1973: *Allende park* (Salvador Allende, socialist politician, President of Chile from 1970 to 1973; XI), 1979: *Pablo Neruda utca* (a 20th century poet, Senator for the Chilean Communist Party; III) (Tudós-Takács 2018; cf. also Ráday 2013: 117, 126, 103, 460, respectively).

3.2.3. 2021–2023

Renaming some streets in the 9th district on the eve of the 2021 Parliamentary Election is often mentioned as an act of protest (BBC 2021; BT/MTI 2021; Komuves 2021; Pintér and Bődey 2021). The Shanghai-based Fudan University planned to open its first EU campus next to a branch of the Danube on a site earmarked for the so-called "Student City", where affordable accommodation would be offered to Hungarian students. The Mayor of Budapest, then a candidate for Prime Minister of the opposition parties, expressed his concerns about China's growing influence in Hungary by promoting the renaming of local streets and highlighting politically sensitive issues. These new road names were a source of embarrassment to the Chinese and also to the Hungarian Government, which supported the Chinese investment: 1973: *Hídépítő utca* ('Bridge Builder Street') became 2021: *Dalai Láma út* ('Dalai Lama Road'), after the exiled spiritual leader of Tibet; 1955: *Helyi Kikötő út* ('Local River Port Road') was renamed as 2021: *Ujgur mártírok útja* ('Uyghur Martyrs' Road'), referring to an essentially Muslim ethnic group, who has been claimed to be victims of human rights abuses in China; 0 > 2021: *Szabad Hongkong út* ('Free Hong Kong Road'), campaigned for retaining the sovereignty of the special administrative region of China; 0 > 2021: *Hszie Si-kuang püspök út* ('Bishop Xie Shiguang Road'), commemorated a Chinese Catholic priest, who was persecuted and jailed several times in China. "Renaming streets alone may not be effective in stopping the project, but it sends a clear message that we are going to use all means at our disposal to protect the Student City plans", as the Mayor explained the purpose of these measures in an online weekly newsletter interview (Lau and Bayer 2021).

In 2022, the Budapest General Assembly, at the same time, supported that a part of 1941: *Gyermek tér* ('Child Square') be renamed *Horn Gyula sétány* ('Horn Gyula Promenade'; XIII), after the Prime Minister of Hungary between 1994 and 1998, a controversial politician because of his role in the 1956 Revolution, as his statue is standing in the square. It was also accepted that a section of 1911: *Vaspálya utca* ('Railway Street') become *Richter Gedeon sétány* ('Richter Gedeon Promenade'; X), near the headquarters of the multinational pharmaceutical and biotechnology company founded by Gedeon Richter. The Assembly was also in favour of new street names in the 23rd district: 0 > 2022: *Bajtai István utca* ('Bajtai István Street'), named after an 18th-century local nobleman; 0 > 2022: *Bodzavirág utca* ('Elderflower Street'), a traditional street name (PestBuda 2022).

3.3. Statistics

According to Hajdú's (1975) observations, the semantic categorisation of names for public areas in Budapest displayed a relatively complex pattern in 1975 (total number of names: 6768):

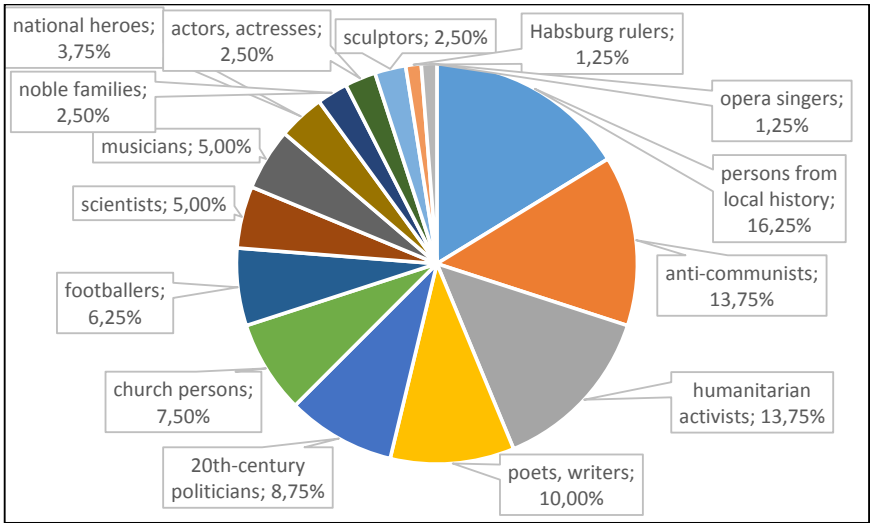


Figure 1. Semantic types of names for public areas in Budapest in 1975 (based on Hajdú 1975)

Recently adopted names for streets and squares discussed above are less varied in their semantic types. Based on a corpus of 92 names adopted in the 2000s, names commemorating persons are predominant:

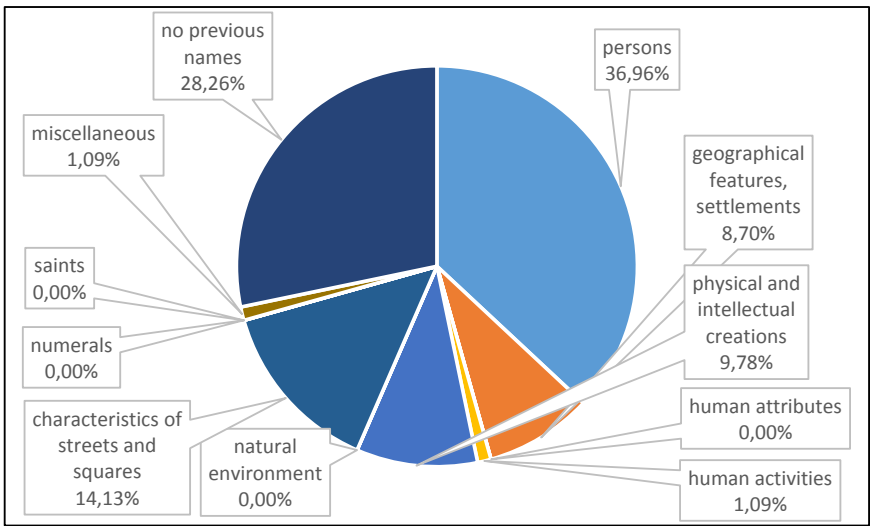


Figure 2. Semantic types of names for public areas adopted in Budapest in the 2000s

Although they are more varied in reference than in the earlier periods:

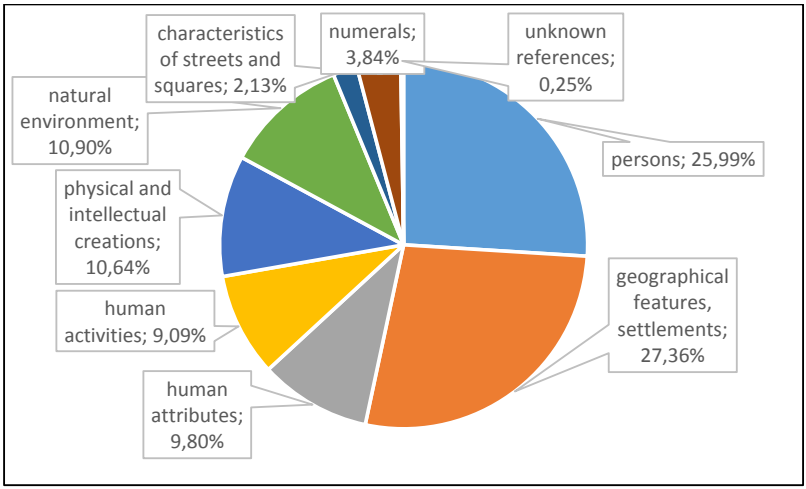


Figure 3. Subdivision of recently adopted names for public areas referring to persons

The dominance of recently adopted street and square names referring to persons is overwhelming, even if it is the same category that lost its instances most frequently as a result of 21st-century street name changes in Budapest:

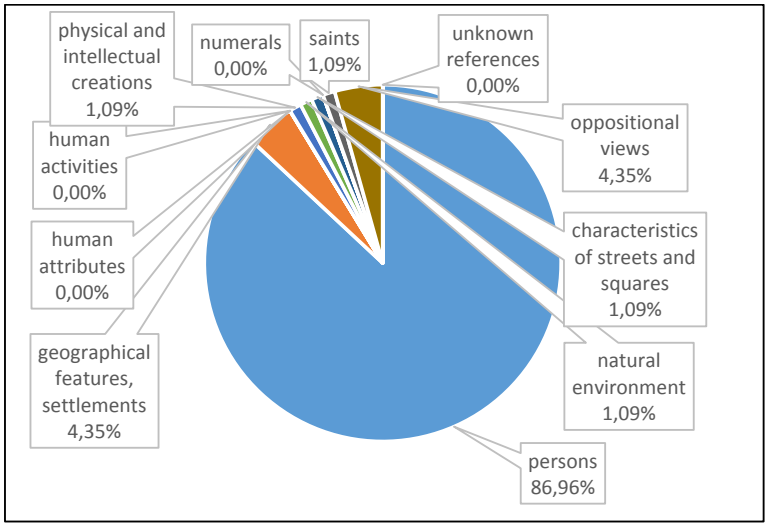


Figure 4. Semantic types of names for public areas discarded in Budapest in the 2000s

The popularity of honorific names for public areas in Budapest has been growing since the middle of the 19th century, and seemingly this tendency is still strengthening today.

4. Conclusions

Data suggest that Budapest's recently adopted street and square names are meant to balance between maintaining traditions and propagating current ideological trends. Previous historical tendencies related to the naming of public spaces in the capital persevere, even if at a lower rate of frequency. Names involving a simple descriptive terms (*Fő tér*),[5] referring to a religious order (*Piarista utca*) or to a Habsburg ruler (*Nándor utca*) echo earlier types of hodonyms. Nostalgia for the Interwar Period is encouraged by adopting new street names of clerical (e.g., *Mindszenty József bíboros tér, II. János Pál papa tér*) or geographical references (e.g., *Székelyszenttamás utca*), and by using contemporary noble titles in name forms (e.g., *Gróf Esterházy János rakpart*).

Although honorific names for public spaces are spreading at the expense of all other name types, persons commemorated in the latest street and square names were often connected to the locality, bearing their names now (e.g., *Bartoniek Géza lépcső, Enzsöl Ellák utca*). The commemorated persons are prominent historical figures (e.g., *Széchenyi István tér*); people important in the cultural sphere (e.g., *Károli Gáspár utca*) or local history in the distant past (e.g., *Forstner János Jakab utca*); aristocratic families whose members were active politicians *(Rudnyánszky utca, Károlyi utca);* honorary citizens (e.g., *Tabódy Ida tér*); people who helped prosecuted Jewish people during World War II (e.g., *Angelo Rotta rakpart, Carl Lutz rakpart*); victims of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution or anti-communist freedom fighters (e.g., *Mansfeld Péter park, Bauer Sándor utca*); 20th-century Prime Ministers and politicians (e.g., *Tisza István tér*); internationally recognised spiritual leaders (e.g., *Boldog Teréz anya tér*); scientists (e.g., *Teller Ede út*); writers, poets (e.g., *Wass Albert tér, Tarasz Sevcsenko tér*); sculptors (e.g., *Zala György utca, Borics Pál utca*); actresses, opera singers (e.g., *Ruttkai Éva park, Simándy József utca*); musicians (e.g., *Radics Béla utca*); footballers (e.g., *Hidegkuti Nándor utca, Albert Flórián út*). Discarded street and square names had references to anyone or anything considered leftish (e.g., *Tanácsház utca, Tersánszky Józsi Jenő sétány*). Still, second-rank supporters of socialism escaped being erased from street signs.

In 21st-century Budapest, new features in naming public spaces include the adoption of purely commemorative names for road sections (e.g., *Slachta Margit rakpart, Albert Flórián út*); the introduction of compensational names (e.g., *Lev Tolsztoj sétány, Tbiliszi tér*); the display of specific groups of people in names (e.g., *Valdemar és Nina Langlet rakpart, Muzsikus cigányok parkja*); the appearance of icons of popular culture in street and square names (e.g., *Elvis Presley park, Radics Béla utca*). Not surprisingly, recent names for public spaces in Budapest manifest the values and the heroes of the early–21st-century Hungarian political and social elite.

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[5] For the interpretation of the Hungarian names, see above.

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