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OSIJEK AND MUSICIANS: STREET NAMING IN SOCIAL, REGIONAL AND EUROPEAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Osijek is one of the bigger cities in Croatia, and is considered to be the capital of eastern region of the country. Orientation to the European cultural values and the affiliation to the Austro-Hungarian cultural circle are often mentioned as the part of its identity. Today's city administration states that their mission is to "develop Osijek as a European metropolis influencing the entire macro-region where it belongs geographically". Also, their vision is "Osijek - a city of satisfied people ... an economically developed, university and cultural center of the Osijek-Baranja County and Eastern Croatia, which is integrated in contemporary European trends" [10]. This paper explores how much are these cultural values incorporated in everyday life in Osijek, by examining the names of the urban toponyms (streets) of Osijek, as we can consider naming of the streets to be a reflection of the social tendencies of the city. On the example of naming the streets to the deserving musicians, we can measure how important the culture in the city is, and how much is Osijek considered to be a part of the European, Croatian, or regional and local cultural milieu. It is significant that only 14 streets are named after the deserving musicians. Only one street is named after an international musician, 50 % of the streets are named after musicians that are not locally or regionally connected to Osijek, but are very important in developing Croatian cultural identity. Osijek also tries to impose itself as a regional center, as can be seen in street names: 21% carry names of musicians who are regionally important, but have no concrete links with Osijek, and finally 29% were named after local musicians. This analysis shows us that despite the nominal tendencies to put Osijek in European context, the city of Osijek still defines itself primarily as a Croatian city, and secondary as a regional center and a local community.

Keywords: Osijek, street naming, musicians, cultural milieu

INTRODUCTION

Near the remains of ancient Roman town of Mursa, a medieval Croatian settlement named Osijek emerged in 7th century. The first mention of the town's name was 1196 in a document where Croatian-Hungarian king Bela was settling the dispute over bridge toll. Osijek quickly became significant medieval town, acting as traffic hub with catholic parish, castles and other urban facilities. It was invaded by the Ottomans in 1526, becoming an important geostrategic point in Ottoman Empire, with famous bridge over Baranja wetlands that was considered to be the eight world wonder, and the biggest bazaar and traffic center of the region. The Ottomans left in 1687, and soon the new baroque town with a fort was erected. In following years, Osijek became an important
Central European city: there were Franciscan, Jesuit and Capuchin monasteries, a printing company (1735), a college of theology and philosophy, a gymnasium, many manufacturers and factories, craft shops and stores. The town was inhabited by foreign officers, clergy, various managers and officials, and also Croatian population, giving the town a real European feel. Osijek was organized in three municipalities stretched alongside south bank of the Drava River under state administration. The three municipalities united by the end of 18th century, and in 1809. Osijek became a free royal city of Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1830 it was the biggest and most developed city in Croatia, but later it was surpassed by Zagreb (today's metropolis) and some other towns due to their fast industrialization. The development of the town was slowed down when Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed and the Kingdom, and later Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were established. The further lagging started after the Croatian War of Independence when the town was seriously damaged, and the new government is still struggling to overcome the traffic isolation, underdevelopment and poverty of this, once advanced European town. (This is the short historical overview of the development of Osijek. For more information, please consult Stari Osijek (Old Osijek) - a very elaborate monograph about the history of the town, with a separate section on education, culture and science development [11]. Also, Osijek: Cultural and historic guide is a very useful book – it "deals with the most significant cultural monuments which have emerged as a result of the rich past of Osijek, but are at the same time the city’s main contemporary determinants" [12, pp. 137].)

In spite this, Osijek is considered to be the capital of the Croatian North-Eastern region of Slavonija. It is home to one of 4 national theatres in Croatia, and the biggest University and Clinical Medical Centre in the region. The city of Osijek has provided two Nobel Prize winners: Vladimir Prelog and Lavoslav Ružička (both for chemistry) to the European and world cultural and scientific heritage. With these two great men, one of the most significant and influential Croatian personalities of the 19th century, Josip Juraj Strossmayer - bishop, theologian, politician, cultural worker (founder of the central Croatian scientific and cultural institutions) and writer should definitely be mentioned. Other important scientists include Mijo Kišpatić and Milutin Milanković. The official web site of Town of Osijek [10] offers a list of Osijek artists and cultural workers of European or worldwide reach in the main artistic fields: visual arts (Adolf Waldinger, Hugo Conrad von Hochtendorf, Bela Čikoš Sesija, Oskar Nemon, Isidor Kršnjavi, Julije Knifer, Ivan Rein, Vladimir Filakovac, Josip Zorman i Davor Vrankić), architecture (Viktor Axmann, Ljudvít Pelzer), literature (Matija Petar Katanić, Dobriša Cesarić, Jagoda Truhelka, Anto Gardaš, Stejpan Tomaš, Josip Vitanović, Josip Florschutz, Antun Vjekoslav Truhelka, Vilma von Vukelić, Alexander Rosenfeld – Roda Roda and Victor von Reisner), film (two-time Oscar winner Branko Lustig and Branko Schmidt), archaeology and cultural heritage (Čiro Truhelka, Kamilo Firinger, Ivo Mažuran, Marija Malbaša and Danica Pinterović). The list includes ten deserving musicians: Franjo Krežma, Franjo Kuhač, Lujo Svečeenski, Dora Pejačević, Pajo Kolarić, Jan Urban, Lav Mirski, Julije Nikoš, Sigmund Romberg and Branko Mihaljević. As the towns' municipality states: "A lot of artists from Osijek have/had top achievements and are famous throughout the Europe and worldwide. These artists and workers in culture represent a great potential for 'cultural branding' of the city" [10].

The municipal officials are pointing out the towns' European cultural heritage stating that their mission is to "develop Osijek as a European metropolis influencing the entire
macro-region where it belongs geographically “. Also, their vision is “Osijek - a city of satisfied people ... an economically developed, university and cultural centre of the Osijek-Baranja County and Eastern Croatia, which is integrated in contemporary European trends” [10].

URBAN TOPOONYMY ANALYSIS AS A RESEARCH METHOD

How can these cultural values be measured? Many scholars, especially those who are proficient in geography, point out the importance of street naming (when we use the term street naming, the word street includes all urban toponyms: streets, squares, parks, gardens, lanes, roads, etc.), as an efficient measure in social and cultural tendencies of a certain area. A renowned Croatian scholar Ivana Crljenko does this kind of research in Croatia. In her paper Urban Toponymy as an Indicator in Contemporary Geographical Researches she establishes urban toponymy analysis as the legitimate methodology in various contemporary researches concerning different social phenomena and processes [5]. She is mostly analysing the practice of renaming urban toponyms as a reflection of political tendencies in our country, especially in post-socialist time [3]. For methodology we also consulted her paper Expression of Identity in Urban Toponymy of the Towns in Kvarner and Istria [4]. The practice of street naming can be used both in quantitative and qualitative analysis. In our research we explored how much are the stated cultural values incorporated in everyday life in Osijek. We also examined how important the culture of the town is, and also how much can Osijek be considered to be a part of European, Croatian, or regional and local part of cultural milieu.

Osijek has a very long tradition in music education: the first attempt to open music school, according to Gojković, was in 1821 [7, pp.7] but both Gojković and Ban place the beginnings of music education far earlier, in 18th [7, pp. 5] and late 17th [2, pp. 13] century. Music life in Osijek is very well documented: Malbaša published a very extensive paper named Music Life in Osijek where she thoroughly describes music events connected to the town, and also brings us biographies of all musicians relevant to the town of Osijek [8]. Gojković [7] and Ban [2] both published monographs about music education in Osijek pointing out the long music education tradition, and naming all the successful music professionals that were first educated in Osijek. Sršan brings us a monograph describing the history of one of the oldest amateur music societies in Osijek: “Zrinski”, but there he also points out that there were many others: “Lipa” choir, “Kuhač” parish, “Osijek 1862”, “Pajo Kolarić” tamburitza orchestra and others [11, pp. 11]. Since all authors claim that music life in Osijek was prolific, one would expect that the developed music culture would show in urban toponymy of the town. Hence, the aim of this research was also to establish is this hypothesis true.

METHODS AND COURSE OF RESEARCH

Analyzing the names of streets, parks, squares and other urban toponyms was not very difficult; we used Sršan’s manual: The Streets and squares of city of Osijek: a historical review[13], as the starting point. We also conducted field research to locate and document all the toponyms that we were to include in our list of urban toponyms named after deserving musicians. The minor issue was Milka Trmina Street. Sršan mentioned it in the section on the history of the streets. He wrote: "By 1993, that street was called Kosta Nad Street. In 1993 it was named after the famous Croatian singer Milka Trmina" [13, pp. 78]. Except in that place, Sršan didn’t mention this street on any other place, including the alphabetical list of all streets at the end of the book. The street cannot be

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found on the interactive map of the Croatian Auto Club [9]. It was not possible to find it on their official list of the streets of Osijek either. Wider search also included terms road, way, avenue, drive, grove, lane, gardens, place, circle, crescent, close, square, hill, mews, vale, path and park, but we did not find anything named after Milka Trnina. Our field research also didn’t reveal any toponym named after Milka Trnina. We sent an inquiry to the Department of Urban Planning and Construction d.d. Osijek, to ask them if a street of that name ever existed. They did not respond to the inquiry, and in the phone conversation that followed, they said they did not have such information. The closest toponym we found was the Street of Kosta Nađ in suburban settlement of Darda. Since we couldn’t find evidence that this street actually exists, we didn’t include it in our list.

The criteria for selecting the urban toponyms for our list presented as a small problem in the case of Faculty Street. In the period between 1952 and 1993, the mentioned street was named after composer Ivan Zajc. Since in Osijek there is currently a street named after Ivan Zajc, we decided to not include the Faculty Street on the list separately. Antun Mihaljević Street also caused a dilemma as Antun Mihaljević was not a musician but plays an important role in the music culture of the Republic of Croatia; in 1835 he wrote a poem „Horvatska domovina“ that was later set to music, and is now the national anthem of Republic of Croatia. The street is also not included in the list separately, but the information is combined with information about the Josip Runjanin Square.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As we already established, urban toponyms can be used as a tool for measuring social tendencies of the town. We conducted both quantitative and qualitative analysis. It is significant that out of 402 toponyms in general, only 119 toponyms were named after deserving citizens, with just 14 musicians included. Most of the urban toponyms (70%) are not named after deserving people, but after relevant geographical toponyms, e.g. names of rivers, lakes, islands, villages, and also floristical toponyms, e.g. names of trees and flowers. Those toponyms are listed as “General toponyms” in Figure 1.

![Urban Toponymy of Osijek Diagram](image)

**Figure 1.** Urban toponymy of Osijek

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As we were trying to test the pro-European tendencies, and also the importance of the town as a national and regional centre, we grouped the toponyms in four categories, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Osijek urban toponyms named after deserving musicians**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European musician</th>
<th>Croatian musician</th>
<th>Slavonian musician</th>
<th>Osijek musician</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bela Bartok Street</td>
<td>Bruno Bjelinski Street</td>
<td>Josip Andrić Street</td>
<td>Franjo Krežma Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ferdo Livadić Street</td>
<td>Vjekoslav Klaić Street</td>
<td>Franjo Kuhač Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ivo Tijardović Street</td>
<td>Josip Runjanin Square</td>
<td>Lav Mirković Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vatroslav Lisinski Square</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pajo Kolarić Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jakov Gotovac Circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ivan Zajc Circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We also made a quantitative analysis based on these four categories. As it turns out, only one street in Osijek bears a name of a deserving international musician: Bela Bartok. If we consider that Bela Bartok is one of the staple figures that define Hungarian national culture, and that this street is located in the city district of Mađarska Retfala (Hungarian Retfala) [13, pp. 24] traditionally inhabited by Hungarian minority, we can argue that this urban toponym is not actually a representation of the town's affiliation to the European cultural milieu, or the reminiscence of our affiliation to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but a testimony of an important role Hungarian minority has in the town of Osijek. Still, since the criteria were set this way, we categorized Bela Bartok Street as an international urban toponym (Figure 2).

![OSIJEK URBAN TOPONYS NAMED AFTER DESERVING MUSICIANS](image)

**Figure 2. Osijek urban toponyms named after deserving musicians**

Four streets (29%) are named after deserving local musicians, two of whom (Krežma and Kuhač) are connected to Osijek by origin. Naming the urban toponyms after deserving local musicians who were appreciated worldwide is logical, but in Osijek there are only two musicians that meet that criteria: Franjo Krežma and Franjo Kuhač.

Franjo Krežma was a child prodigy violinist, who died at a very young age of 19, but by that age he managed to play in Europe’s greatest music halls and he was also appointed

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concert master of Bilse Orchestra (forerunner of The Berlin Philharmonics) without an audition. There is an extensive monograph by Fajdetić: *Franjo Krežma, Croatian Violin Virtuoso in His and Our Time* [6] that describes the fairytale like life story of this young virtuoso. Franjo Kuhač was the first Croatian musicologist who documented the lives and work of many Croatian composers and musicians, and also recorded a lot of traditional music. He was well-known among fellow scholars in Europe, especially for his claim that Joseph Haydn and Franz Liszt are of Croatian origin. The description of his work and merit can be found in both Malbaša [8, pp.179-180] and Ban [2, pp. 54]. The third urban toponym in the category of local deserving musicians is Pajo Kolarić Circle. This name is well known among people of Osijek, although Pajo Kolarić didn’t have an international career. He is appreciated for promotion of Slavonian national folk instrument tamburitza and for professionalizing tamburitza education in these parts of the country [8, pp. 179], and therefore it is logical for him to have an urban toponym named after him. The last urban toponym in the category of local deserving musicians is Lav Mirski Square. Lav Mirski was not an Osijek native, but his work is significant for Osijek, as he was an active conductor (he conducted the Croatian National Theatre Orchestra, as well as some other amateur troupes in Osijek) and educator (he was the director and one of the founders of music school with worldwide reputation (he worked as a conductor of Tel Aviv Opera House and Symphony Orchestra and Radio Orchestra of Jerusalem). He spent last 14 years of his life in Osijek where he was buried, and is responsible for raising the music life of Osijek to a higher level. His work is described by Gojković [7, pp. 18], Ban [2, pp. 36-39], Sršan [14, pp. 34-35] and Malbaša [8, pp. 180].

The desire to highlight the belonging to Croatian nationality is obvious: as much as 7 streets (50%) are named after Croatian musicians that have no connections with the town. Some of those musicians are connected to the Croatian National Movement, a cultural and local campaign in this region that is a part of mid-19th century Spring of Nations Movement (Croatian National Movement is also sometimes referred to as Illyrian Movement, since Croats were mistakenly considered to be descendants of Illyrian tribes that inhabited this region in antiquity. More about the movement and the music of the period can be found in: Andreis, *Music in Croatia* [1, pp. 115-194]). Urban toponyms named after the deserving musicians of this period are: Ferdo Livadić Street and Vatroslav Lisinski Square. Those musicians were important in shaping Croatian music culture: Ferdo Livadić was a renowned guitar player and composer [1, pp. 142-144] and Vatroslav Lisinski is the author of first Croatian national opera (*Ljubav i zloba*- Love and malice) [1, pp. 133-142]. Other two toponyms: Jakov Gotovac Circle and Ivan Zajc Circle can also be connected to Croatian national movement: although they were active at the end of the 19th (Zajc) [1, pp. 168-176] and the first half of the 20th century (Gotovac) [1, pp. 231-235], their work as composers and workers in culture had a strong connection to Croatian musical and cultural heritage, and they can be considered “the Illyrians of the 20th century”. The other two urban toponyms: Bruno Bjelinski Street and Ivo Tijardović Street can’t be connected to this movement, or the region of Slavonia, and their existence is somewhat puzzling. Bruno Bjelinski was an important Croatian 20th century composer, whose music language can be described as mostly neoclassical [1, pp. 273-274], and Ivo Tijardović was mostly famous for his operettas *Mala Floramye*- Little Floramye and Splitski Akvarel – The Split Aquarelle that describe customs and folk music of Croatian coastal region Dalmatia [1, pp. 245]. Why were those two composers selected, and not some other, more important ones, or
ones that are more connected to our region? The answer might be political: both of these composers were active in Partisan Movement. These two streets had different names during the socialist regime: they were named after socialist-time heroin Milica Križan [13, pp. 25-26] and Serbian poet Petar Petrović Njegoš [13, pp. 74]. After the socialist regime, in early nineties of the 20th century, a lot of streets were renamed to make the town more Croatian, but as there were some citizens that were still pro-socialistic, naming the streets after deserving Croatian composers that were also Partisans can be considered as a diplomatic solution.

The tendencies of making Osijek a regional centre are visible in urban toponym naming as well: three streets (21%) are named after musicians that are regionally significant: Josip Andrić Street, Vjekoslav Klaić Street and Josip Runjanin Square. Josip Andrić was a Croatian composer, folklorist and musicologist [1, pp. 244] [15, pp. 296,306,308,317], who has spent his teenage years in Slavonian town of Požega and Vjekoslav Klaić was a historian, musicologist, music organizer and amateur conductor [1, pp. 177-178] [15, pp. 250] born in small Slavonian village of Garkin. The third urban toponym in this category can also be a topic of discussion – it is the Josip Runjanin Square. Josip Runjanin was a very important figure in Croatian National Movement: he was a musical amateur who set the Croatian national anthem to music in 1846 [1, pp. 145]. As mentioned before, the lyrics of the anthem were written by Antun Mihanović (there is also an Antun Mihanović Street in Osijek). Except of national, Josip Runjanin is also of regional importance, as he was born in Slavonian town of Vinkovci. Most people consider him to be a Croatian and not Slavonian composer, but as he is born in this region, we decided to put him in the Slavonian musicians’ category.

CONCLUSION

In this research we explored two theses. First one was that Osijek is considered to be a part of European and Croatian, as well as regional and local cultural milieu. Second thesis was that Osijek has a prolific music tradition. In our research we used qualitative and quantitative analysis of the town toponymy as our research method. Crijenko conducted similar research in Kvarner and Istria regions of the country and noted that the most prominent level of belonging was regional, while the frequencies of national and local toponyms are variable and much more dependent on the specific conditions of the development of a particular city [4, pp. 82]. The findings of our research are somewhat in concordance with the findings of Crijenko: despite the nominal tendencies to put Osijek in European context, no evidence of those tendencies were found; the city of Osijek still defines itself primarily as a Croatian city, secondary as a local community and tertiary as a regional centre. The second thesis also wasn’t confirmed in whole: we found some evidence of music culture in urban toponymy, but not as much as we expected: music culture is represented in only 4% of the town urban toponymy.

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