



Preserving cultural heritage through collecting and analyzing toponyms – Introducing the Hungarian National Toponym Registry

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The Practices of Naming Places

- **The Hungarian National Toponym Registry** (Hoffmann 2022)
- Importance of place-naming:
 - formation of **personal and community identity**
 - **cultural and political significance**
- **Unique sources for various disciplines** like linguistics, ethnography, history, archaeology, or geography
- Street-naming practices in Hungary: *Iskola utca* ('School Street'), *Templom utca* ('Church Street'), *Piac tér* ('Market Square'), *Múzeum körút* ('Museum Boulevard'), *Alsó utca* ('Lower Street'), *Határ út* ('Boundary Road')



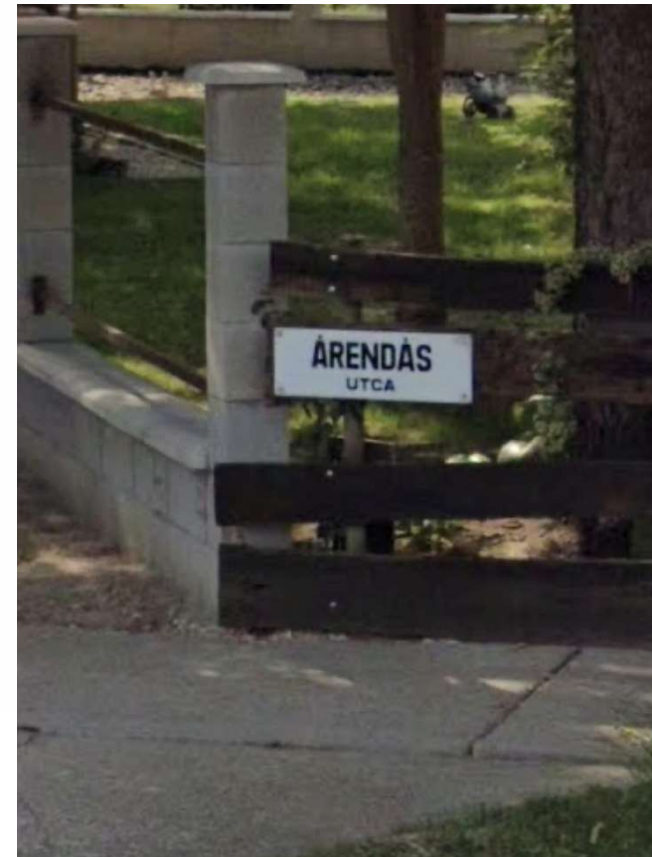
Kossuth Lajos Street and Petőfi Sándor Street (Source: metaldesign.hu)

Official Names of Public Spaces

- **Preserving earlier microtoponyms:** *Árendás utca* ('Tenant Street'); *Szérűskert utca* ('Threshing Floor Garden Street'); *Szénáskert* ('Haygarden'); *Eperföld* ('Strawberry Field'); *Szőlőkköze* ('Lane of Grapes')



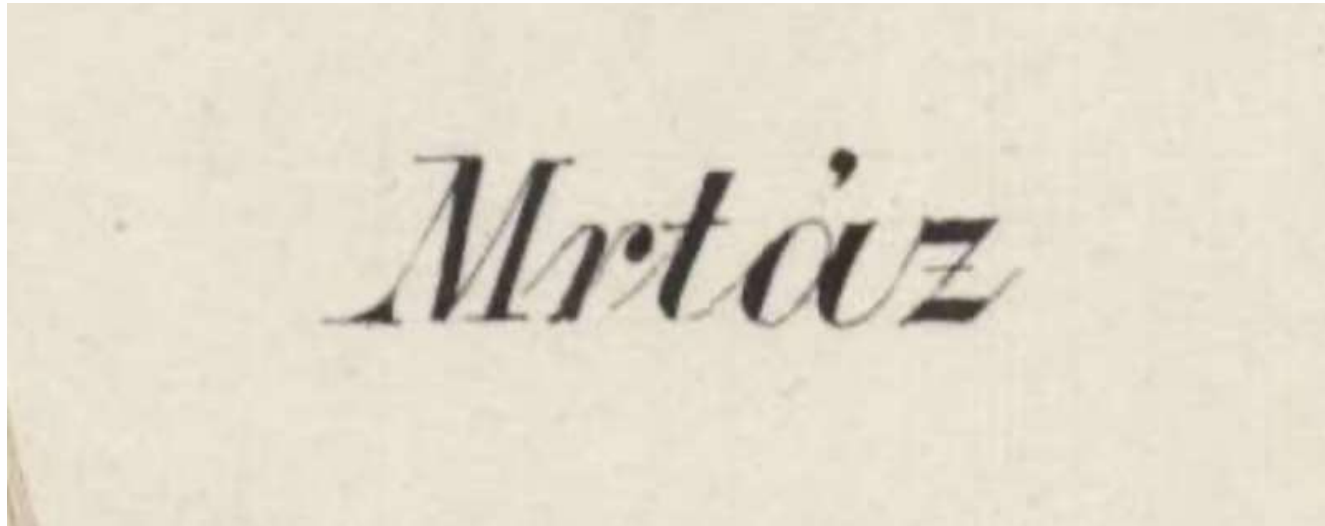
1879 (K.)



2024 (Google)

Survival and Disappearance of Toponyms

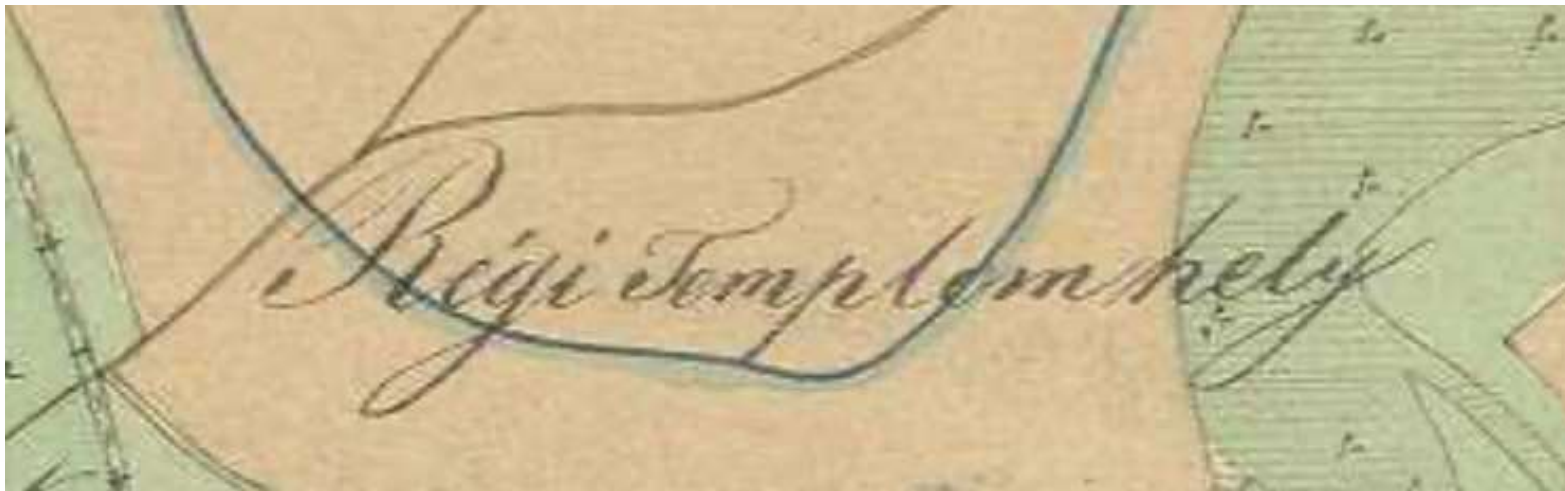
- Tied to the **community** which uses it
- Survival and change of a toponym:
 - *Martanháza* > *Mrtáz* ~ *Mrtháza* ~ *Mrtáza* > *Mártaháza*



1879 (K.)

Survival and Disappearance of Toponyms

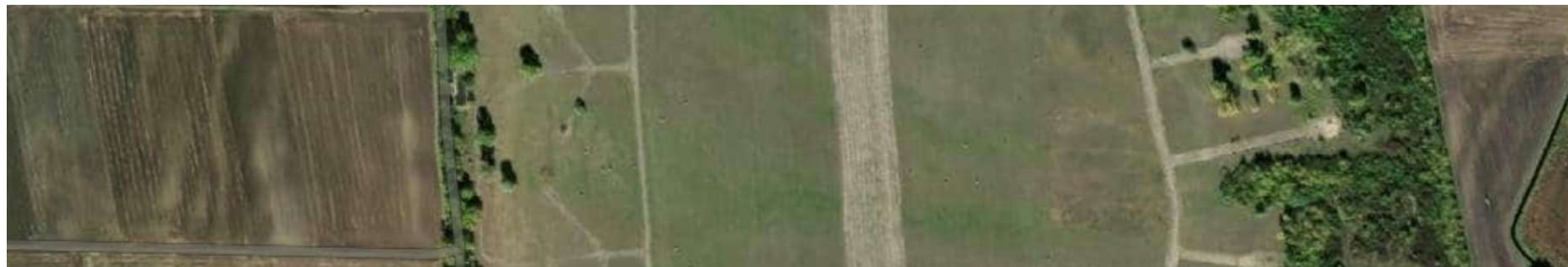
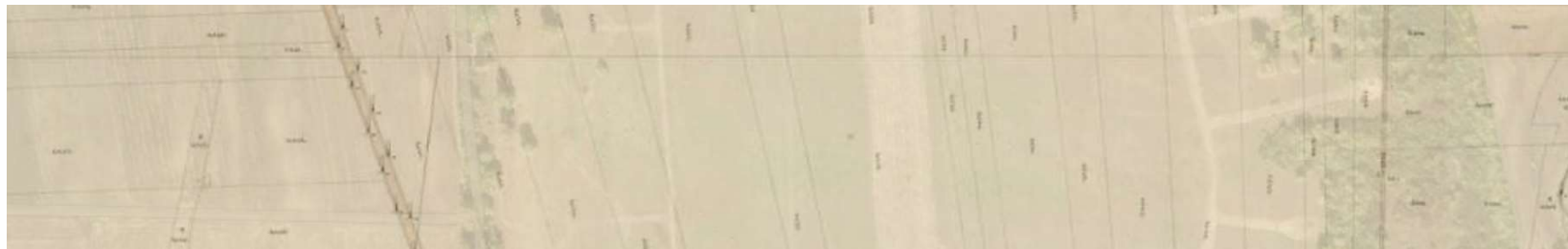
- Factors in **disappearance** of a toponym:
 - destruction of the denotatum (the physical place)
 - changes in its function
- **Medieval settlements were vanished** during the Ottoman Turkish occupation – still retaining some names



Name of a wasteland: *Régi templomhely* 'old church site' (T1)

Survival and Disappearance of Toponyms

- In the outskirts: **changes in the use of a land**
 - *Ökörjáró* ('ox-walker') → *Röptér* ('airport')



1879 (K.) --> 2024 (Google)

Survival and Disappearance of Toponyms

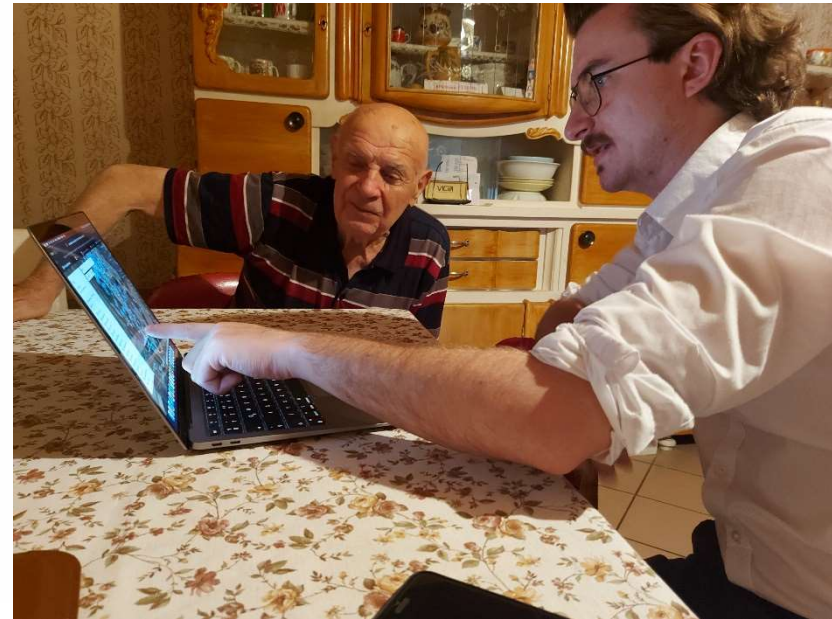
- In the outskirts: **changes in the use of a land**
 - *Szes ~ Sesz* ('flat land') → *Tocsilósza*



Tocsilósza. (Fotó: Roland József Balogh)

'We Are in The Twenty-Fourth Hour'

- The urgency of gathering data from **living sources**
- Microtoponyms are particularly at **risk of disappearing**
- Names of smaller geographic features (plots of land, hills, and ponds etc.) **are rarely recorded in official documents**





The Hungarian National Toponym Registry (MNHP)



- large-scale, national toponym collection project
- with universities in the Carpathian Basin
- on the entire Hungarian-speaking region within and around the Carpathian Basin, including Moldva
- analyze historical data and interviews

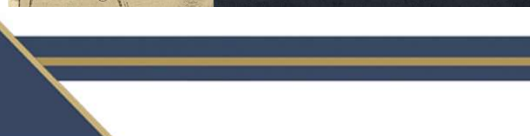
The Hungarian National Toponym Registry (MNHP)

- Sources of the names and information
 - texts from fieldwork
 - modern publications
 - (such as books, maps, digital databases, and media content),
 - historical printed materials
 - data archives
 - hand-drawn maps
 - charters
 - manuscripts
 - other materials from previous toponym collections or related research

The Hungarian National Toponym Registry (MNHP)

- Collected data and information types
 - names (with all variants)
 - source
 - date
 - location of the denotatum (with coordinates)
 - etymological informations
 - informations about the place
 - any associated sayings, legends, or anecdotes

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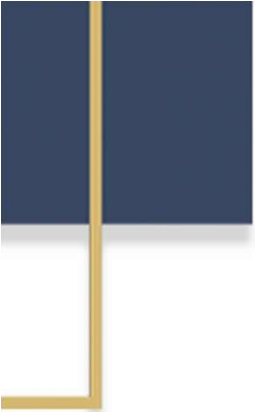


Bibliography and sources

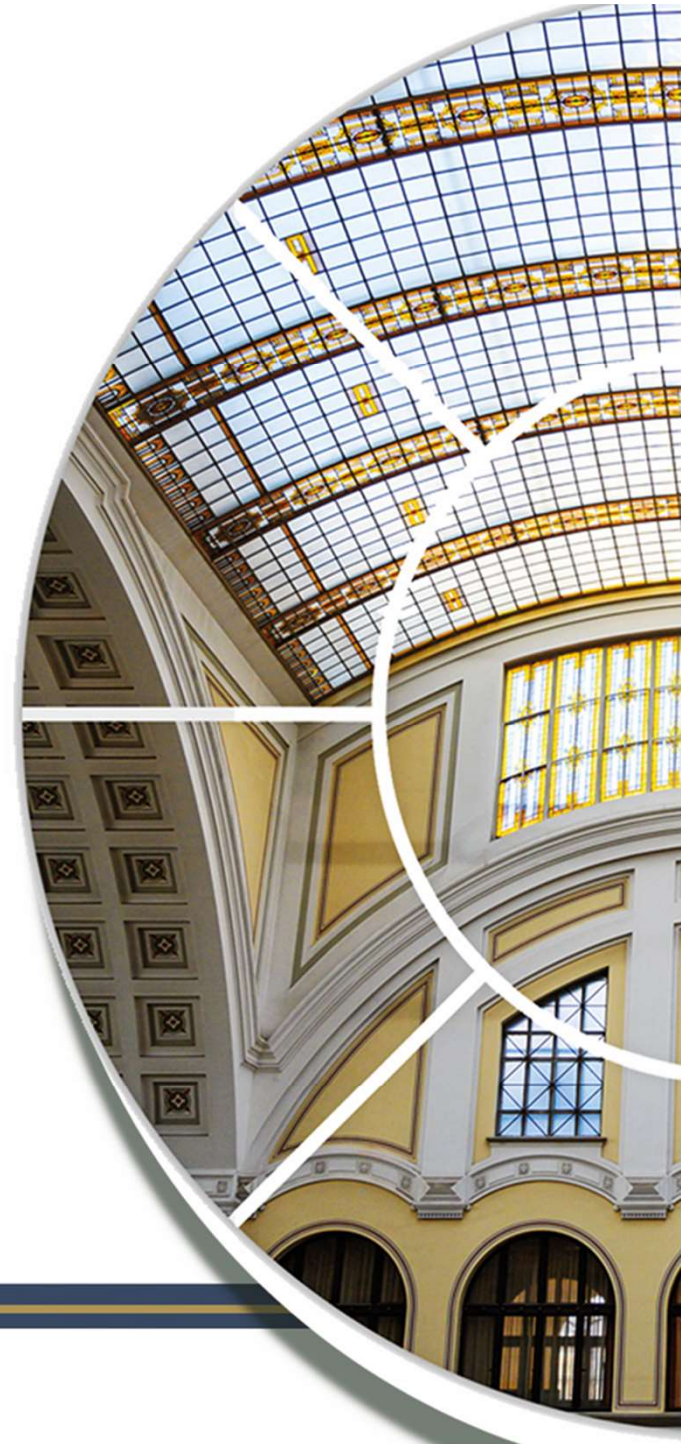
Hoffmann, István 2022. The Hungarian National Toponym Registry Program Launched. *Névtani Értesítő* 44: 125–130.

K. = Habsburg Birodalom. Kataszteri térképek. 19. század.

T1 = Vízhelyzeti térképe a' Dunának és árjainak tekintetes nemes ... [PML XV. 6. (PMT) 18/9] (1839)



Thank you for
your attention!





A programot
a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia
támogatja, és a Debreceni Egyetem
Magyar Nyelvtudományi Tanszéke
koordinálja.