

Slíz, Mariann. Karády, Viktor – Kozma, István. *Név és nemzet. Családnév-változtatás, névpolitika és nemzetiségi erőviszonyok Magyarországon a feudalizmustól a kommunizmusig.* [Name and Nation. Family Name Changes, Name Policy and Ethnic Minority Balance of Forces in Hungary from the Feudalistic Ages to the Socialistic Era] Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002. Pp. 378; Farkas, Tamás. *Családnév-változtatás Magyarországon.* [Family Name Changes in Hungary] Nyelvtudományi Értekezések 159. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2009. Pp. 116; Farkas, Tamás – Kozma, István, eds. *A családnév-változtatások történetei időben, térben, társadalomban.* [The Histories of Family Name Changes in Time, Space and Society] Budapest: Gondolat – Magyar Nyelvtudományi Társaság, 2009. Pp. 412. AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

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Official family name changes have attracted a great deal of highly politicized attention in the modern history of Hungary, having been regarded either as a national or social question or as a matter of language precision, with the secondary literature on the subject written mainly by historians and linguists. As studying name changes was a taboo in the socialist era, this investigation could only be revived after 1989. This renewed scientific interest is illustrated by the three works of primary importance that are reviewed here, and which have been published in the last decade.

Viktor Karády and István Kozma's book, the first monographic elaboration of the question, examines the most notable periods of the history of family name changes between 1787 and 1956 from a historical viewpoint. Their work is founded on a representative body of diverse primary sources, such as officially published data of the authorized name changes, applications, propagandistic texts and historical works about name changes written in the examined periods, minutes of parliamentary meetings and legal documents. The authors present the process of name changes and the political, ideological, social, economic, demographic, cultural and linguistic milieu of this phenomenon with great thoroughness. Studying the groups of name-changers, they analyse their ethnic and religious composition, and their distribution by age, occupation and region in each period to period examined. As significant number of name-changers had Jewish or other ethnic minority origins, the demonstration of the changes reflect the changing policies towards minorities, especially in relation to Jews. The authors also describe the changes in the legal background that enabled name changes. Presenting the history of the campaigns for Magyarization, they investigate the attitudes to the question of name changes throughout the examined periods, surveying not only the official viewpoints of the contemporary governments, but also, the opinions of contemporary historians and political commentators from all spectrum of political ideology. They discuss, for instance, how the propagandist Simon Telkes declared in 1906 that name changes had the function of making Hungarian culture known worldwide through "real" Hungarian names of famous Hungarians and that, therefore, all Hungarian citizens with foreign family names should consider Magyarizing their names as their patriotic duty.

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As a result of the renewed interest in name changes exemplified by Karády and Kozma's work, in 2001 Tamás Farkas wrote a doctoral dissertation on the same topic, a revised version of which was published in 2009. Unlike Karády and Kozma's historical approach, Farkas studies the topic as a linguist. While it has to be mentioned that linguists had reflected on name changes since the end of the nineteenth century, they had primarily done so from a prescriptive viewpoint. The first comprehensive survey of name changes written from the viewpoint of historical name studies was Loránd Benkő's article (Loránd Benkő 1948–49. "A családnév-változtatás kérdései [Questions Concerning Family Name Changes]." *Magyarosan* 17: 40–45, 65–72; 18: 1–6), which was followed by involuntary silence during the socialist era, and even since 1989 only few journal articles have been published on the topic.

While Karády and Kozma's work ends with 1956, Tamás Farkas deals with name changes in the second half of the twentieth century, a topic that had not hitherto been studied scientifically. Farkas points out that the rationale and characteristics of name changes have considerably changed, so that while previously they had primarily been motivated by political, social or economic reasons, in the second part of the century personal reasons – e.g. adopting stepparents' names or making bynames official – became dominant and their multitudinous nature disappeared along with this change. To orient readers who do not speak Hungarian the work contains an English abstract (107–111), available at <http://akkr.hu/download.php?pdfid=23837&url=http://static.akkr.hu/media/2/3/8/3/7/23837.pdf>.

In his study, Farkas relies on a model of name changes elaborated by István Kozma, according to which name change is an interaction between two agents (the applicant and the administrative agency), which is influenced by the historical, ideological, legal, social, cultural and linguistic circumstances as a third agent. Farkas examines all of these factors, highlighting the differences from previous periods: for instance, the aim to express the Hungarian origins of the name-bearers by their family names were highly represented among the motives for name changes during the second world war due to the nationalistic atmosphere but fell dramatically after 1948 and decreased slowly but constantly from the 60's to the 80's as a result of the neutral policy with respect to family names in the socialistic era. Farkas also adds a fourth agent to the socio-historical model, the family name itself, since its structure of meaning and its functions provide the cause or the aim for the change. First, he compares natural and artificial family names: while members of the previous group are given to individuals by the community, the elements of the latter are chosen by the individuals themselves; the two types of family names originate from different times and from different mental and linguistic backgrounds; the aim of natural naming is identification, while the aim of artificial naming is gaining advantages or abolishing disadvantages; and finally, the basis, the method and the device of naming also differ in the two given types, such as the appearance of professions emerging after the stabilization of Hungarian natural family name system in artificial family names such as *Gépész* 'mechanic', *Mérnök* 'engineer'.

In addition, Farkas presents the factors indicating changes in family names, illustrating the method and the reasons of their operation with some typical examples: the

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structure of meaning, the role of identification, the information content, the connotation, the basis of naming (i.e. the motivation) and the etymological meaning of the family name. For instance, the operation of family name as an ethnic symbol can cause the name to become derogatory and hence drive bearers of such names to change them – e.g. unlike the Jewish-like or Slavic-like names of the previous periods, in the second part of the twentieth century these are mostly names regarded as typically Gipsy-like ones, such as *Kolompár* ‘tinsmith’ and *Lakatos* ‘locksmith’ but Remagyarization of names by those Hungarians who moved to Hungary from the neighbouring countries can also be mentioned. The negative connotations of a name can be a motive for change too (e.g. *Tolvaj* ‘thief’, *Retkes* ‘dirty’). Since the change could be motivated not only by regarding the old name derogatory but by treating the new one as more profitable – e.g. adopting a family name ending with -y (which is an old orthographic form of the suffix -i which means ‘originating from’ but is considered ‘more elegant’ than the simple -i version, such as *Budai* ~ *Buday* ‘originating from Buda’) has incorrectly been considered to be as an expression of the noble origins of the name-bearer –, the author taxonomically analyzes chosen as well as abandoned names. For instance, the greatest per cent of chosen names has constantly been the type deriving from a place name since the nineteenth century while the popularity of the other types – e.g. originating from given names or common nouns – has changed from time to time.

Finally, the third volume reviewed here, edited by Farkas and Kozma, is closely related to the first two. Though it is partly compilation of the papers presented at a symposium on name changes in 2007, it is more than a conference proceedings as many of the authors were members of a research group working on official Hungarian family name changes. Moreover, the volume can be regarded as a trailblazer in that it adopts a strongly interdisciplinary approach: beside linguists and historians, there are some literary historians, archivists, cultural anthropologists, hebraists etc. among the authors.

Tamás Farkas’s position paper (11–27) presents the questions and viewpoints of the research on the topic and gives an account of the results obtained by the research group. Mihály Hajdú interprets family name changes in the wider context of personal name changes (i.e. both family and given name changes), considering not only the practice of name giving in modern Hungary but also in Europe and in other cultures (29–40). Viktor Karády outlines the socio-historical contexts of family name changes (41–55) and establishes that – except for changes motivated by personal or family reasons – this process has always been connected to national/ethnic minority balance of forces and was born under the pressure of necessity. Ferenc Vörös approaches this question from the viewpoint of the Hungarians forced to live as a minority outside the territory of present-day Hungary after the Treaty of Trianon (1920) (57–74). For instance, he deals with the problem of transcription of Hungarian names into Slovak (e.g. from *Mészáros* into *Mésároš*).

The next two studies in the volume are both related to the period of Austria-Hungary. Analyzing the discourses created by contemporary propaganda texts, Péter Maitz describes the ideology of how bearers of foreign sounding family names became viewed as “others”, and how changing these names became vehicles of national identity (77–93). Dezső Juhász discusses the linguistic expressions of romanticism and national ideology in the newly chosen family names (95–101).

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The volume endeavours to present not only the history of Hungarian family name changes but also introduces their different – geographical, diachronic and social – aspects. For example, three papers (Katalin Fenyves: 137–152; István Kozma: 153–171; Judit Kozma: 273–284) deal with the name changing strategies of the Jewish population of Hungary. Imre Gábor Nagy approaches the group of name changers according to their occupation, displaying the promotional and obstructive factors in the name changes of clerks (173–192). Several studies represent the role of certain areas or settlements in the history of name changes, for example, Gábor Mikešy (251–260) demonstrates the opportunities of geographical informatics by plotting the data on a map of a significant year (1895) in the history of name changes.

As a further novelty of this volume, it does not focus exclusively on Hungarian aspects but several papers deal with the effect of the examined phenomena on non-Hungarian nationalities in Hungary. For instance, three authors seek to explore the history of name changes of the Germans in Hungary (Györgyi Bindorffer: 105–119; Gizella Föglein: 121–135; Anikó Szilágyi-Kósa: 223–233). There are also three studies which draw a parallel between name changes in Hungary and in other countries: Ágoston Berecz discusses the Romanianization initiated by the Romanian intelligentsia in the second part of the nineteenth century (263–272); Viktória Bányai outlines the history, reasons, goals and methods of Hebrewization in Israel by some Hungarian examples (285–93); while Zsuzsanna Fábrián concentrates on the different reasons and goals of Hungarian and Italian family name changes stemming from the dissimilar historical and social background of these name systems (295–310).

The papers are followed by three appendices, providing indispensable help for further research. The first one lists the number of cases of name changes in different periods (345–352), whereby we can clearly see the extent and the most significant periods of the campaigns for name changes as well as the amount of data accessible in the various sources. The second one contains the most important official documents of family name changes from the beginning of regulation to the present day (353–396), so that the whole documentation of the legal background has finally become available in Hungarian in one corpus. The third appendix is the bibliography of the sources and the secondary literature written between 1872 and 2009, which also contains some items about the name changes of American Hungarians (397–404). This book can be viewed as a volume of collected studies on the one hand, and as a handbook of name changes on the other hand. This duality is strengthened by the fact that the papers often reflect on each other to create connections among their different viewpoints, while the English abstracts at the end of the studies facilitate the international reception of their results.

The three volumes reviewed here have created a sample for everyone interested in official Hungarian family name changes. Their viewpoints, methods and results are connected to and complement each other. Since they draw a picture about the society and mentality of the given periods, they can be employed profitably by several disciplines.