ON THE PROCESSES OF ADAPTATION OF BULGARIAN NAMES IN TSARIBROD, SERBIA

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Abstract. This study is motivated by the legal possibility of spelling the names of Bulgarian national minority members in the Republic of Serbia in accordance with the Bulgarian spelling standard. The paper presents the historical and administrative aspects of the spelling of personal and, in particular, family names of Bulgarians in Tsaribrod, Serbia.

Keywords: Bulgarian language; first and last names; Tsaribrod; Serbia

The present paper[1)] presents the factors that affected the various ways of spelling Bulgarian names in Tsaribrod's church baptism registers and civil registers of birth between 1883 and 1989[2)]. Church registers in Serbia were kept up until 1946 when state civil registers were introduced by the State Civil Registers Act (Закон о државним матичним књигама, Сл. лист ФНРЈ 29/46).

In short, the paper examines the historical circumstances that led to the emergence of a Bulgarian minority in Serbia and to the establishment of a specific section in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia, guaranteeing the right of using names freely[3)] , according to the spelling standard of national minority languages. Among the goals set by the present study is surveying the modes of spelling of the studied names by means of a conditional periodization and with regard to the normative regulations and the language, which the names of Tsaribrod Bulgarians are written in.

The anthroponyms of Bulgarians in Serbia, as part of the Bulgarian cultural and historical heritage, are insufficiently studied[4)], despite the significant amount of researches devoted to the Bulgarian onomasticon. A notable exception in this respect is presented by the thesis 'Местни и родови имена от Цариброд ско' ('Local and Generic Names in Tsaribrod') defended in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which proves a major step forward in the onomasticon studies of Bulgarians in Serbia (Choleva-Dimitrova, 2018). A modest contribution to collecting and studying the local anthroponyms is presented in the article 'Именослов села Сми-

ловци (општина Димитровград) (1899 – 1915)' (Šćepanović, Davitkov, 2012: 439 – 460).

Historical aspects of the researched problematics

The historical events that affected the emergence of the Bulgarian minority in Serbia can be chronologically relayed in the following order:

– The Russo-Turkish War (1877 – 1878), the signing of the San Stefano peace treaty and the straining of relations between Russia and the other Great Powers.

– The Treaty of Berlin (1878), Tsaribrod was a border town within the Principality of Bulgaria, Pirot and Niš were surrendered to the Kingdom of Serbia.

– The First World War, the signing of the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine (November 27, 1919), the regions of Tsaribrod, Bosilegrad, Strumica and some Kula villages were annexed to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (KSCS). On November 6, 1920, Yugoslav military units seized the territories referred to in Art. 27 of the Treaty prior to the official final judgement of the International Boundary Commission (Velev, 2009: 88 – 99).

– The Mid-War period[5)] (the aggravated relations between the two states, the problem with the co-ownership of properties, the frequent border closures, the difficult foreign policy situation in Bulgaria) (Velev, 2009, Raychevski, 2008: 120 – 200).

– The Second World War, the annexation of Bulgaria to The Tripartite Pact on March 1, 1941, and the capitulation of Yugoslavia on April 17, 1941, Tsaribrod once again was within the borders of Bulgaria.

– Under the Paris Peace Treaty from 1947, Tsaribrod once again remained within the borders of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY).

In the KSCS census from 1921 and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia census from 1931 there was no evidence of a nationality other than Yugoslavia. Only in the first of the two censuses there was evidence of a mother tongue, and in both of them – of a denomination (Stojković, Martić, 1953: 33, 35). The Constitution of FPRY from 1946[6)] guaranteed for the first time wider-ranging civil rights of national minorities, including Bulgarians. According to the data from the 1948 and 1953 Yugoslavia censuses, Bulgarians were 61140 (Stojković, Martić, 1953: 36) and, according to other data, 61708 in number (0,36%) (Jončić, 1962: 4).

According to the data collected by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia[7)] on the latest census from 2011, those who identified as Bulgarian were 18543 in number (0,25 % from the general population of Serbia – 7186862), and according to the same data, 53,5% of Tsaribrod's population identified as Bulgarian.

Regulations and practices of spelling personal and family names in Tsaribrod's church and civil registers

Among the principal factors, defining the name spelling of Tsaribrod's inhabitants ever since the first church registers so far preserved, are the domestic regulations of

the country, in which these people have lived in the past and continue to live to this day. As we will see from the proposed periodization, these regulations have dealt with this issue differently over the years. The period following the annexation of the so called Western Outlands is particularly noteworthy in this respect since the local Bulgarians were not a recognized minority[8)], a status they acquired not until the Constitution of FPRY from 1946.

Nowadays, in the Republic of Serbia the right of using one's name in accordance with the language of the respective minority has been regulated since 2006 in the second part of the Constitution of Serbia[9)], *Human and Minority Rights and Freedoms* (*Људска и мањинска права и слободе*), in the section *The Right to Legal Capacity* (*Право на правну личност*), Art. 37: "The choice and usage of one's own personal name and the names of one's own children are free". In the section *The Rights of the Child* (*Право детета*) Art. 64 states: "Every child has the right to a personal name, to be registered in the birth registers, to learn of his/her origin and preserve his/her identity", while Art. 79 of the section *The Right to Personal Identity* (*Право на очување посебности*), among the enumerated rights of national minority members (for example, freedom of protecting, preserving, developing and publicly expressing one's national, ethnic, cultural and religious affiliation; using personal symbols in public places; using one's own language and writing; acquiring education in one's own language etc.), also specifies the right of using personal and family names in one's own language.

As we read in Đurić, the Republic of Serbia adopted "the dual model of names usage", while "the usage of personal and family names in minority languages[10)] and its recognition is regulated in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia by the Family Law Act (ПЗ)[11)], the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities Act (ЗЗПСНМ), the Civil Registers Act (ЗМК), the Identity Card Act (ЗЛК) and the Travel Documents Act (ЗПИ)" (Đurić, 2014: 959 - 968). The dual usage of names of national minority members is stipulated in the regulations of these acts. For example, in the section *The Right to Personal Identity* of the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities Act, Art. 9 says: "National minority members have the right to freely choose and use personal names and names of their children, as well as enter their personal names in all personal documents, official registers and databases in the language and spelling of the respective national minority members".[12)] In addition, it is stated that the right referred to in para. 1 of the same article does not preclude the parallel entry of the name in accordance with Serbian spelling and writing. A similar formulation is listed in Art. 17 of the Civil Registers Act: "The personal name of the child, parent, spouse and deceased is entered in the Serbian language (in Cyrillic), and national minority members have the right to enter their personal names in accordance with the language and spelling of

the national minority, which does not preclude the parallel entry of the personal name in the Serbian language (in Cyrillic) as well".[13)]

Given the historical circumstances pointed out and the material collected from the Tsaribord registers, we can establish the following main periods of spelling personal and family names of the local Bulgarians in accordance with the current regulations and writing language:

1. Church registers (1883 – 1949)

– The period between 1883 and 1920. Church registers were kept during this period – the originals are kept in the History Archive in the town of Pirot, while copies of them kept in Tsaribord's Civil Status Division were examined for the purposes of this study. The period of these registers coincides with the events after the Liberation of Bulgaria up until the end of the First World War. During the specified period Tsaribrod entered the Bulgarian exarchate. As specified in "A Chronology of the Regulations, Containing Decrees on the Names of Bulgarian Citizens in the Period 1892 – 1999", after the Liberation of Bulgaria "a Decree of December 10, 1880 approved an Act for the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths (ЗЗРЖУ). According to it, the registers by civil status were kept by the parish priests, the imams and hamams who were obliged to enter into a specific register every birth, marriage and death".[14)] These church registers were kept in the Bulgarian language. In the beginning of this period, most names were two-component with regard to the names of parents, while the names of children were specified only as personal names. The same text says that under the Act for the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths the parents entered both their personal and family names, while "*the mother's name in the birth certificate consisted only of her first and second names*". Later on, all three names began to be entered (personal names, father's names and family names[15)], as specified for the period after the entry into force of the Person Act (ЗЛ) from 1909.

– The period between 1920 and 1941. After the annexation of Tsaribrod by KSCS, church registers began to be kept in the Serbian language. The father's name was most often two-component (personal and family name), in few examples the second (father's) name figured in the form of initials, while the mother and the children were only designated by their personal names. Besides being written in accordance with the Serbian spelling, most family names of local Bulgarians were altered (there were singular cases of unaltered family names, for ex. *Tsaribrodski* [*Царибродски*]) through the addition of the endings *–вић, –ић* [*-vich, -ich*] that mark the ending of most Serbian family names. For example, we come upon family names like *Златановић*, *Петровић*, *Крстић*, *Ћирић* etc. It is interesting to trace the progressive alteration of personal names, for ex. the emergence of names, which were not typical of the previous period like *Драгутин, Жарко,*

Срећко, Небојша, Лепа, Лепосава, Милица etc., while other names acquired a Serbian version - *Ђорђе (Георги), Ћирило, Ћирил (Кирил), Ђерасим (Герасим), Димитрије (Димитър)* – that is reflected in today's family names, deriving from the same personal names, for ex. *Ћиров* and *Киров*, *Ђорђев* and *Георгиев*, i.e. there are two versions of one and the same family name, deriving from the Serbian, respectively the Bulgarian, version of the personal name.

– The period between May 1941 – 1949. During this period, Bulgarian names were spelled in accordance with the Bulgarian spelling standard. Names were two-component and three-component, while in the beginning of the period two-component names predominated. Thus for example, in 1942 there were 73 children enlisted where the three-component names were over 20, mostly the father's names, while there was no evident consistency in enlisting the mother's names, which figured only as two-component, and only rarely as three-component, personal names. In 1946 the number of three-component names increased (out of 105 children enlisted there were over 80 with three-component father's names, while the inconsistency with regard to the mother's names continued, although two-component names became more frequent). Registers of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church were kept during this period. Obviously, after the end of the war there was a short period of time, during which Bulgarian church registers were kept as well.

2. Civil registers (1946 – 1989)

– The period between 1946 and 1956. In 1946 state civil registers were introduced in FPRY (Закон о државним матичним књигама, Сл. лист ФНРЈ 29/46). It is noteworthy that during the period between 1946 and the beginning of 1949 both Bulgarian church registers and Serbian civil registers were kept. The names of members of the already recognized Bulgarian minority were entered in civil registers in the Serbian language. Even so, it is possible to say that during this period we observe a certain correctness in the spelling offemale family names where the most common endings *–ова/-ева* [*-ova/-eva*] were preserved, for ex. *Михајлова Неделка* (in this case, the Bulgarian version of the personal name was preserved), *Петрова Олга, Алексова Теменушка* etc. The names were two-component (with rare exceptions).

– The period between 1956 and 1989. The above-mentioned situation continued until 1956 when these names were equalized with male family names, ending in *–ов/-ев* [*-ov/-ev*], by virtue of a decree based on Art. 28 of the Personal Names Act and Art.207, al.1 of the General Administrative Procedure Act. During the specified period, names were spelled in accordance with the Serbian spelling standard and the family names of both sexes were equalized, i.e. they ended in *–ов/-ев* without specifying the sex of the person. There were only singular cases of spelling female family names with the endings *-ова/-ева*.

The alterations of family names can be traced in the following diagram:

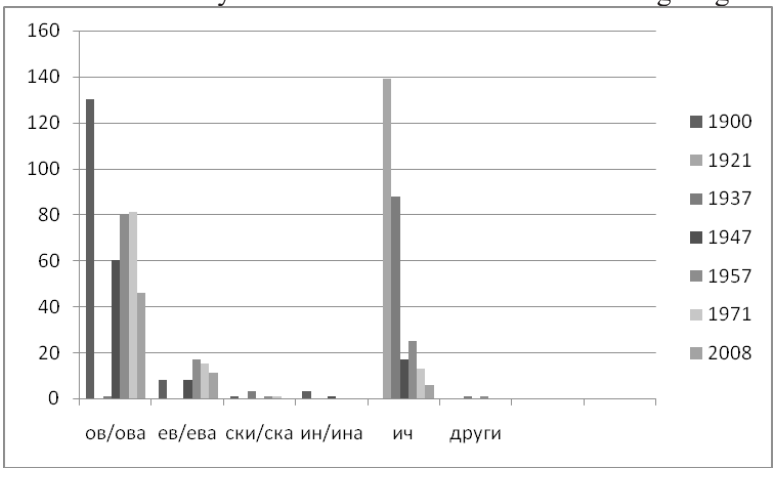

Diagram 1. Family names of Bulgarians in Tsaribrod over different periods

These changes run parallel to the events pointed out in the proposed periodization. The data from the years 1900, 1921, 1937 concerns the family names of parents, mostly the father's names. In the 1900 church register, part of the names are illegible, but it is important to note that in most cases the parents' family names were two-component, as shown in the above-mentioned periodization where the mother's name was designated by her father's name. The father's names are here spelled with the endings *-ова, -ева, -ина* and *-ска* [*-ova, -eva, -ina*, *-ska*]. Besides the fact that all family name endings were altered to *-ич* [*-ich*], in the Serbian church register from 1921 the mother's name was entered as a personal name, which remained unchanged in the 1937 church register as well. Three family names, ending in *-ски* [*-ski*], were entered in the 1937 register. In relation to the 1947 state civil register, we should note a continuity in spelling female family names with the endings *-ова, -ева,* there is a single caseof the *–ина* ending, while in 1957 female and male family names were already equalized, a process that continued during 1971 and 2008. The data from 2008 was collected with the aid of the Tsaribrod patronage service.

As already mentioned, during the initial period of the first church registers preserved in Tsaribrod the mother's first name was spelled as personal and father's name. The following diagram displays the alterations of endings that took place between 1883 and 1897:

During the specified period we observe an increased number of names, ending in *-ова/-ева,* on account of the father's names, ending in *–ина* and*-ска*. This is particularly observable with the names, ending in *-ина*.

Diagram 2. Father's names of women between 1883 and 1897

The following diagram displays the female family names during the period immediately after the end of the Second World War. We observe a continuity in spelling female family names with the endings *-ова, -ева*, rarely with theending *–ина*:

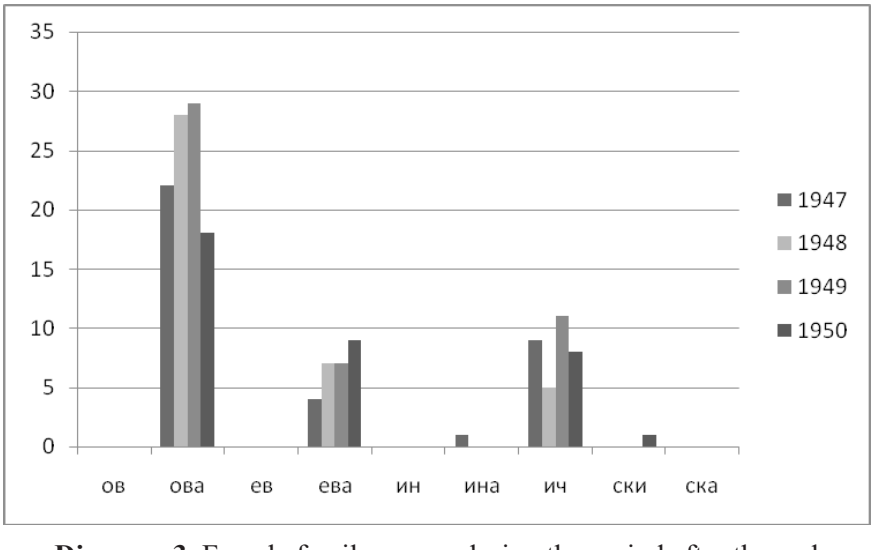

Diagram 3. Female family names during the period after the end of the Second World War

Of particular interest are the female family names that have been equalized with male family names, ending in *-ов/-ев*, since 1956 on. If we choose to chart a particular period of recent Tsaribrod civil registers, we will achieve the following results:

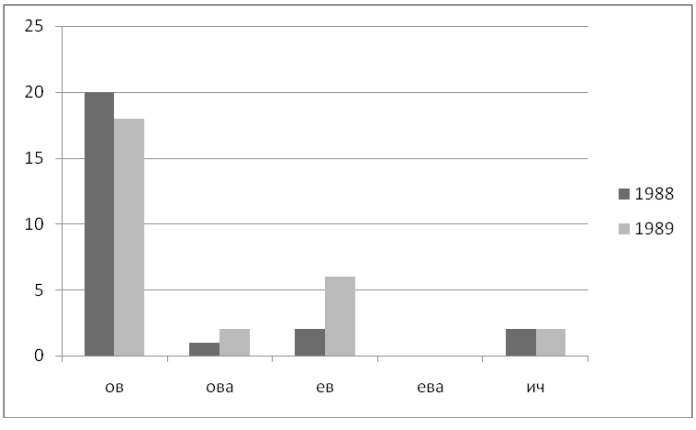

Diagram 4. Female family names from the years 1988 and 1989

Diagram 4 displays only female family names from the years 1988 and 1989. The only female family names, ending in *-ова*, belong to persons born in Bulgaria and afterwards registered in the Serbian civil register.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above-mentioned initial results of the research we can conclude that the historical events that caused the detachment of Tsaribrod from the territory of Bulgaria and its annexation to KSCS/Yugoslavia affected, among other aspects of the life of the Bulgarian community in Serbia, the spelling of their personal and family names in church and civil registers. Historical factors like the international situation, the relations between Bulgaria and Serbia from the end of the First World War until now that have passed through different stages of aggravation and attempts for improvement, as well as the domestic regulations of the two neighboring countries where the local population lived – all that exerted and continues to exert an impact on the onomasticon of local Bulgarians in Tsaribrod.

NOTES

1. The study is part of the project "Processes of Adaptation of Bulgarian Names in Tsaribrod (Serbia)" within the framework of the program "Young Researchers and Postdoctoral Fellows" initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science (Bulgaria).

2. After the closure of the maternity ward in Tsaribord, registration of newborns was carried out in accordance with place of birth, most commonly in the town of Pirot.
3. In the Republic of Serbia a given name is two-component, consisting of a first and a last name. In the Republic of Bulgaria a given name is three-component.
4. The issues related to Bulgarians in Serbia are studied chiefly with respect to history, mostly after 1989, while an increased interest in this problematics emerged not until 2000. A valuable study in this respect is the monography "The Western Outlands, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (1919 – 1931)" (Velev, 2009). Since 2004 more than ten regional studies, concerning different villages in the municipality of Tsaribrod, have been published. Equally important are the monographs devoted to the cultural history of the city (Georgiev, 2018), as well as the study on the development of the Tsaribrod press (Gotseva, 2019).
5. The period between 1919 and 1931, concerning the politics of Bulgarian and Serbian governments in relation to the territory annexed by the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, is thoroughly described by V. Velev (Velev, 2009).
6. See http://www.arhivyu.gov.rs/active/sr-latin/home/glavna_navigacija/leksikon_jugoslavije/konstitutivni_akti_jugoslavije/ustav_fnrj.html
7. See http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/Popis2011/Nacionalna%20pripadnost-Ethnicity.pdf
8. In KSCS and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia Bulgarians were not recognized as a minority. Jončić writes: "The legal status of individual national minorities in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia very often and to a large extent depended on the relations between Yugoslavia and individual countries at present" (Jončić, 1962: 11). Art. 12 of the Constitution of KSCS from 1921, the so called Vidovdan Constitution, and Art. 11 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1931, the so called Octroic Constitution or September Constitution, guarantee the right to denomination. Art. 16 of the Constitution from 1921 stipulates the right of minorities to education in their mother tongue, yet, as we learn from Jončić, "the Bulgarian language is among the unrecognized languages". (Jončić, 1962: 11).
9. See http://www.ustavni.sud.rs/page/view/139-100028/ustav-republike-srbije
10. On international law and names of national minority members see Đurić, 2014: 962 – 968.
11. The abbreviations indicate the original Serbian designations.
12. See http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/slsrj/skupstina/zakon/2002/11/2/reg
13. See http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2009/20/3/reg
14. See https://www.grao.bg/normact/normativ-imena.html

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