Dynamics of the modern Hungarian given name system

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   Abstract: This paper introduces the Hungarian given name stock from the last decades of the 20th century to today. It also briefly deals with its history and the legal factors that have influenced the development of the semi-closed (i.e., restrictively expandable) contemporary Hungarian given name set. The paper separates the questions of the name stock and name set and focuses on the methods for the development of the name set and its structural changes. The investigation is based on a model which combines the aspects of the linguistic origin of names, the method through which the name in question entered the name set, and the sources of new names. The various categories are introduced and exemplified. The paper finally presents some of the typical developments in the top hundred names (of newborns and the entire population) based on 21st-century national population registry statistics.
   Keywords: Given name stock, structural changes, Hungarian, 21st century.

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Dynamique des changements des prénoms hongrois contemporains

Résumé : L'étude présente le stock des prénoms hongrois depuis les dernières décennies du 20ᵉ siècle à nos jours. Elle esquisse l'histoire de ce stock et les réglementations juridiques qui ont une influence sur les changements du système actuel, système semi-clos permettant un élargissement limité. Elle fait la différence entre stock onomastique et usage des éléments et met l'accent sur les méthodes permettant d'élargir le stock ainsi que sur ses changements structurels. L'analyse s'appuie sur un modèle qui combine plusieurs points de vue comme l'origine linguistique des prénoms, leur mode de formation et leur source, ce qui implique l'introduction et la présentation de diverses catégories. La dernière partie est consacrée à l'analyse de quelques changements typiques survenus dans le stock des 100 prénoms les plus fréquents (pour l'ensemble de la population d'une part, pour les nouveau-nés de l'autre), utilisant les statistiques des registres nationaux sur la population du 21ᵉ siècle.

Mots-clés : Stock des prénoms, changements du système, hongrois, 21ᵉ siècle.

Die Dynamik von Veränderungen im modernen ungarischen Vornamensystem

Zusammenfassung: Der Beitrag stellt den Bestand an ungarischen Vornamen von den letzten Jahrzehnten des 20. Jahrhunderts bis heute vor. Es wird kurz auf die Geschichte des Namensbestandes und die rechtlichen Regelungen eingegangen, welche die Entwicklung der halbgeschlossenen (d.h. restriktiv erweiterbaren), gegenwärtigen ungarischen Vornamen beeinflussen. Der Beitrag behandelt die Frage des Namensbestandes und die der Namensverwendung getrennt, und konzentriert sich auf die Methoden der Erweiterung des Namensbestandes und ihrer strukturellen Veränderungen. Die Untersuchung basiert auf einer Herangehensweise, die die Aspekte der Herkunft der Namen, der Art und Weise ihrer Entstehung sowie der Spenderbereiche der entstandenen Namen miteinander kombiniert, wobei verschiedene, neue Kategorien eingeführt und vorgestellt werden. Der Beitrag präsentiert schließlich aufgrund der statistischen Angaben des staatlichen Melderegisters des 21. Jahrhunderts einige typische Veränderungen in dem Namensbestand der frequentesten 100 Namen innerhalb der Gesamtbevölkerung und der Neugeborenen.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Vornamenbestand, strukturelle Veränderungen, Ungarisch, 21. Jahrhundert.

Dynamics of the modern Hungarian given name system[1]

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1. Introduction

This paper focuses on notable changes in the structure of the Hungarian given name system over the past fifty years. Due to the socio-culturally embedded nature of proper names, their all-time stock reflects the cultural, social, economic, political etc. characteristics of a given society. The study's raison d'être is the fact that Hungary has undergone great changes in every aforementioned aspect over the past decades: some of these changes are globally identifiable, some are typical for the eastern part of Europe and some are specifically Hungarian. Thus, the analysis will expectedly reveal some uniquely Hungarian features of the given name stock and its recent history, alongside with characteristics common in Western societies or at least in Central and Eastern Europe. Consequently, the paper may provide a suitable base for comparative research on the recent given name stocks of other (in particular, European) countries.

To offer a complete picture, first the earlier history of the Hungarian given name stock, its legal regulation through the ages, and the socio-cultural factors and motivations behind the changes will be discussed briefly. Next, the sources and a comprehensive model for the analysis will be introduced, which makes the description of the system perspicuous and comparable with other given name systems. Throughout the paper, the full set of usable, registrable names (name set) and the pool of names actually borne in a given period (name stock) will be demarcated and changes in these will be presented separately.

2. The history and the composition of the Hungarian given name set

Before settling in the Carpathian Basin and converting to Christianity, the base of the given name set was names of Hungarian origin, with names borrowed from languages the Hungarians had contact with. (A handful of names of Turkic origin can still be identified, e.g., *Tas* 'stone'.) Due to continuous contact with peoples speaking German and Slavic languages since settling in the Carpathian Basin, a significant number of names have been

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adopted from these (e.g., *Detre*, cf. German *Dietrich*; *Szoboszló*, cf. Slavic *Sobeslav*). Other borrowed names can be observed in the name stock of the nobility as a result of cultural contact (e.g., *Jolánta*, cf. French *Yolande*), specifically, names originating in German and French chivalric literature (e.g., *Roland*, *Trisztán*; cf. Slíz 2016: 247–249).

After conversion to Christianity, an ecclesiastic name set appeared alongside the secular name set, most notably at the beginning of the 11th century. These biblical and martyrological names were mostly of Greek and Latin origin. (The two will be considered as a unit because, in many cases, it is hard to decide from which language an actual name was borrowed as the influence of Greek Orthodox Christianity was also present in Hungary, albeit to a much smaller extent.) Due to canonisations, names originating in other languages also entered the ecclesiastical name set, e.g., *Henrik* (*Heinrich*) from German, *Vencel* (*Wenceslav*) from Slavic and *Ferenc* (*Francesco*) from Italian (Slíz 2017: 50–99).

By the 15th century, ecclesiastic names crowded out those of secular origin, and for centuries after, no major structural change occurred in the name set. Even the Reformation during the 16th–17th centuries did not bring about substantial change in the name set but only modified the internal composition of the name stock: the names of certain saints decreased at the country level and Old Testament names, which had been less frequent, became more widespread. (Cf. also Slíz & Farkas 2018.)

The rebuilding of the secular given name set only started in modern times by adopting foreign names. After the Ottomans were driven out, the whole of Hungary became part of the Habsburg Empire and German cultural and linguistic contact became especially powerful. Thus, in the 18th–19th centuries, foreign given names, predominantly of German origin, were adopted more frequently (e.g., *Ferdinánd, Rudolf, Lipót* 'Leopold'; *Ludovika*, *Alojzia*, *Hermina*).

In this period, the female equivalents[2] of several long-used ecclesiastical male names entered the Hungarian name set, not necessarily due to religious connections (without a canonised saint bearing the name). They typically reflected German, and to a smaller extent, French influence. Thus, the female versions of these names are much more similar to the original forms of the names than the male variants which were adopted in the Middle Ages (e.g., *Sándor* 'Alexander': *Alexandra*; *István* 'Stephen': *Stefánia*; *József* 'Joseph': *Jozefa*; *Antal* 'Anthony': *Antónia*; *György* 'George': *Georgina*).

The 19th century brought changes in terms of the sources of newly adopted names: a wave of fictional (mythological and literary) names. Names originating from Greek and Roman history and culture, reflecting the influence of the Enlightenment and Classicism, made their way predominantly into the more

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[2]   Hungarian given names do not grammatically denote their bearers's sex, thus their connection to it is only determined by tradition and use. However, most of the female names of foreign origin can easily be detected due to the reservation of their typical endings (e.g., *-a*, *-ia*, *-ina*).

educated groups of society, yet rather sporadically (e.g., the poet and writer Ferenc Kazinczy, the leader of the language renewal movement named his daughters *Iphigénia* and *Thália*). Albeit rarely, the given names or surnames of prominent people of the period were also used as given names (*Napóleon*, *Garibaldi*).

Names created specifically to establish a new national name set were, on the other hand, more widespread (Farkas 2017). This goal was achieved by using various methods: translating foreign given names (e.g., *Konstantin > Szilárd* 'steadfast'); reviving extinct medieval names (e.g., *Géza*, *Béla*, *Vazul*); using national authors' literary name inventions (e.g., *Tünde*, *Dalma*, *Tímea*); or creating female versions of existent male ones (cf. *György > Györgyi*, *József > Józsa*).

The 20th century saw the continuation of the earlier processes (in many ways parallel to the history of other European given name systems, cf. Leibring 2016), with new source languages also appearing in the latter part of the century (cf. Sections 6 and 7). Consequently, a major part of Hungary's contemporary given name set – especially the most frequent names and particularly female names – belongs to the set of internationally used names (cf. Caffarelli & Gerritzen 2002: 680–683, Farkas 2017: 145), similarly to the majority of the name sets of Western culture (Gerritzen 2006: 178–181).

3. Changes in the motives behind name-giving

Changes in the given name stock are partly reflections of changes in the motives behind name-giving (Hajdú 2003: 347–637, Slíz 2017: 100–130), resulting in the appearance and disappearance of names and shifts in the ratios of the name set by origin as well.

The name-giving practices of the pre-Christian period were partly descriptive, partly magical in motivation, best served by names that had been created from common nouns and were etymologically transparent. Conversion to Christianity substantially changed the given name stock, dominated by the intention and practice of using names from Christian culture. In later centuries choosing a name from this set was mainly motivated by religious considerations (e.g., giving the name of a saint whose holiday was on or near the day of birth), or inheritance (being given the name of a relative from the older generations, or the godparent). These motivations slowed the pace of changes in the name stock. While the former practice (naming after a saint) had all but disappeared by the onset of the 20th century, the latter (inherited names) has remained a significant consideration.

The advent of nationalism introduced new naming trends reflecting the wish to express national traditions and affiliations. Fashion in the sense of giving names according to parents' individual tastes and pursuit for originality only became a significant motive from the 19th century, affected by more extensively, even globally detectable phenomena. The history of these changing sets of motivations is also a reflection of changing attitudes to the sacred and profane (Slíz & Farkas 2018: 283–286).

Especially after 1989, political, economic, cultural, and social changes (growing individualisation, stronger and multifaceted connections to other countries, their people and culture along with global trends, the Internet, mass media and popular culture) have been an ever-stronger influence on parents' tastes and openness to internationally used names, similarly to the majority of societies in the Western culture group. These changes in the patterns of name-giving motivations explain why Hungary's contemporary given name set is much more diverse than it was in the previous centuries or even a few decades ago and more similar to the given name set of other European countries (cf. e.g., Caffarelli & Gerritzen 2002: 708, Gerritzen 2006, Lawson 2006: 195, Leibring 2016: 210–211, Harvalík 2018: 284).

4. Legislation regarding name-giving in Hungary

The earliest documented regulations concerning given name choice in Hungary go back to the synod of Buda in 1279, stating that only priests had the right to give newborns names. To document name-giving, church registers began in the 17th century and became mandatory at the end of the 18th century. Secular state registration came into effect in 1895, which also ordained that the given name cannot be insulting in nature, and must be registered in the official language, although a minority equivalent may be provided in brackets. The beginnings of modern legislation regarding name-giving were followed by more detailed regulations (e.g., the banning of hypocoristics as given names), but highly detailed acts only came about in the second half of the 20th century (Raátz 2012; Megyeri-Pálffi 2013: 132–139).

The regulations of the 1950s and 60s set the framework for today's codified norms: a baby can be given a maximum of two given names, corresponding to their sex; names of foreign origin must be registered in their Hungarian equivalent (if there is one, e.g., *Cristopher → Kristóf, Alice → Aliz*), or must at least reflect Hungarian spelling norms according to their pronunciation (e.g., *Matteo → Matteó, Jennifer → Dzsenifer*).

For a long time, there were no accessible and comprehensive given name lists to help parents choose names for their children. There was but a list of some thousand names, comprising a rather random selection of the current name set and without specifying whether a name was male or female in use (Babó 1948) by way of an official name register. It was in 1971 that a comprehensive given name dictionary, based on careful research, was published (Ladó 1971). This became the benchmark for registrability as of 1982. Giving a name not included in it and thus adding to the name set was only possible through a special procedure, in possession of a supporting statement from the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Today applications submitted by parents are evaluated by the Given Name Committee of this institute, today named the Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics.

After the regime change, in the first half of the 1990s, an attempt was made

to significantly liberalise and deregulate the system in response to the increased demand. A list was created based on the official population registry data of given names, and all names on the list were declared registrable. This resulted in more than ten thousand names (including the names of foreign citizens), which raised numerous problems: names borne by members of both sexes, foreign spellings, misspellings and a plethora of variants. The list was revoked after a couple of years, and attempts were made to replace it with new and substantially extended editions of the above-mentioned given name dictionary (Ugróczky & Bíró 1997; Ladó & Bíró 1998). The name lists of the constantly expanding name set have been published on a monthly basis since 2009 on the website of the Research Institute for Linguistics, along with the guidelines used when deciding new requests (cf. Section 6). When the online list was first published, the name set was revised, and some of the names made registrable in earlier years removed.

Name-giving is still regulated, with some exceptions, by the above-mentioned guidelines (Raátz 2012: 24–30). Since 1982 members of traditional national and ethnic minorities have been allowed to diverge from them – earlier completely freely, but given name lists were compiled by the minority councils in 2004. For understandable reasons, there are separate rules regulating the names of foreign citizens. Legally changing one's name can only involve otherwise registrable names.

The Constitutional Court of Hungary answered several appeals concerning the rights pertaining to personal names in 2001 and ruled in favour of the existing practice of expanding the name set in regulated ways (ABH. 2001). The currently valid legislation concerning these questions is *Act I of 2010 on civil registration procedure* (Atv. 2010/2020). Parallels of several elements of this regulation can be found in other European countries, too (cf. e.g., ABH. 2001: 9683–9684, Felecan 2014).

5. The sources and the model for presenting the expansion of the name set

The sources of the analysis include dictionaries, containing the entire given name set: the first methodically compiled professional given name dictionary (Ladó 1971), which became the basis for the first legislative regulation of the name set (cf. Section 4); its expanded and revised edition (Ladó & Bíró 1998); and the most recent and complete dictionary of the Hungarian given name set (Fercsik & Raátz 2017). The sources include the lists of registrable names published on the website of the Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics updated on a monthly basis with the addition of the newly accepted names (UnJ. 2020). Papers dealing with changes in the Hungarian given name set in recent decades (Raátz 2002, 2003, 2015; cf. also Gulyásné Mátraházi 1981) have provided typical examples for the analysis as well. Temporal changes are presented based on data from the national population registry concerning the top

hundred given names in the entire population and given to newborns since 2004.[3]

In the following, the relevant linguistic and onomastic methods and tools used in the current expansion of the given name set – i.e., the types of newly registrable names supported by the Given Name Committee – will be presented, with emphasis lain on the origin of names. Since, however, there are different interpretations of the term *origin* in the literature, we shall adopt a model to demarcate the use of these interpretations as follows (Slíz 2020): (i) linguistic origin, (ii) the method of creating the name, (iii) the source of the name.[4] The model facilitates the categorisation of new given names by correlating these interpretations with each other.

(i) The idea of linguistic origin itself is also subject to various interpretations: the ultimate origin, referring to the language where the name was originally created or the language from which the name was borrowed. When providing a comprehensive description, the intermediary stages can be pinpointed as well. For example, the very rarely used contemporary Hungarian *Filippó* harks back to ancient Greek as its ultimate origin (*Philippos*); this form was adopted by Latin (*Philippus*), developed from that into Italian *Filippo,* which made its way into Hungarian. This means that *Filippó* is directly of Italian origin – as opposed to *Fülöp*, a related traditional element of the Hungarian name set, which is directly of (medieval) Latin origin. With regard to the current topic, the language from which the name was borrowed is of the highest importance, as only this reflects the linguistic and cultural context of a name's entry into the Hungarian name set.

(ii) The method of creation is different for given names of foreign and Hungarian origin. The former entered the name set through adoption, undergoing minor phonetic, phonological and typically orthographic changes, too (e.g., French *Abélard* > Hungarian *Abelárd*, English *Meghan* > Hungarian *Megán*). If, however, the name undergoes morphological and/or syntactic changes as well (word-formation, compounding), these must be considered processes of the adoptive language (as in the cases of common nouns). Thus, these names are to be categorised as Hungarian in terms of origin. For example, the female name *Ajtonka*, created by suffixation from *Ajtony*, a male name of Turkic origin, or *Hannadóra*, a compound of *Hanna + Dóra* (both of foreign origin), are to be considered of Hungarian origin. As seen, linguistic origin and method of formation are closely related. Thus, these aspects shall be combined in the following analysis.

When looking at the source, the question is whether the given name entered the name set from the actual name stock of a people (non-fictional

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[3] Yearly population registry statistics (PopReg. 2003–2019, available online, always refer to the previous year, click on the menu under *Lakossági számadatok*).

[4] The consideration of the religious background could be another possible factor. It need not be discussed in connection with the contemporary Hungarian given name set, since religious aspects, similarly to the majority of European countries, are no longer among the significant motives of choosing given names.

names), or if it is a name of a fictional character (of mythology, literature, film, music, video games, etc.) that found its way into the actual given name set (fictional names). The boundary between these categories might be somewhat blurry, and it might often be difficult to decide in specific cases. (E.g., *Dafné* 'Daphne': originally from Greek mythology, nowadays a given name in numerous languages.) Thus, in the following, these two sets shall not be demarcated very strictly, only as a way of presenting the typical sources of relatively new names that can potentially be categorised as fictional.

6. The origin of new names and methods of their creation in the past fifty years

The analysis should begin with the methods of creation employed in new names of Hungarian origin, followed by names of foreign origin, demonstrated through donor languages.

6.1. New names of Hungarian origin

The four possible methods of adding names to the name set are name creation, category change, name building and re-creation. Name creation involves the creation of a string of sounds previously non-existent, even partially, also as a common noun. This is very infrequent and typically happens with fictional names (e.g., *Anada*, the female character of a Hungarian novel). The majority of new names of Hungarian origin are born from existing elements (made up of pre-existing common nouns, proper names and suffixes) by category change, name-building or re-creation.

6.1.1. Category change

Using this method, given names are created from common words or other types of proper names without any modification of their form.

6.1.1.1. From common words

This method is more widespread within the female name set (see examples below), with hardly any male examples (e.g., *Acél* 'steel', *Bojtorján* 'burdock', *Erdő* 'forest', *Erős* 'strong', *Kos* 'ram'). The reason for this lies in the fact that typically certain semantic categories are capable of expansion, and these are characteristic of the female name set (not only in the Hungarian system of given names). These include flowers and flowering plants (e.g., *Bodza* 'elderflower/berry', *Búzavirág* 'cornflower', *Gerbera* 'gerbera', *Primula* 'primrose'), fruits (e.g., *Barack* 'apricot/peach', *Kökény* 'blackthorn', *Málna* 'raspberry', *Mandula* 'almond'), spices (e.g., *Fahéj* 'cinnamon', *Gyömbér* 'ginger', *Majoranna* 'marjoram', '*Sáfrány* 'saffron'), precious stones or metals (e.g., *Gyémánt* 'diamond', *Jáde* 'jade', *Platina* 'platinum', *Rubin* 'ruby'). Some of these were used in the Middle Ages, so their creation can only be considered a category change in terms of the contemporary name set and must be seen as a re-creation in the context of the entire history of Hungarian anthroponymy.

6.1.1.2. From other name types

The most frequent of these changes is when hypocoristics become given names, which is a general tendency in Western culture (cf. Caffarelli & Gerritzen 2002: 708, Leibring 2016: 211). This method is supported, barring "oversuffixed" versions (those with multiple diminutive suffixes) in the practice of the Given Name Committee. For example, *Erzsi*, *Böske*, *Csöre*, *Örzse* are registrable as given names out of the hypocoristics of *Erzsébet* 'Elisabeth'. However, only hypocoristics that can be documented from the Middle Ages are supported in the case of male names (e.g., *Mihály* 'Michael' > *Miske* and *Misó*). The reason for this difference lies in the fact that while the majority of typical female hypocoristics have been in continuous use since the Middle Ages, several male ones have since gone out of use. Consequently, in a comprehensive diachronic perspective, these names are the results of re-creation.

Other name types do not often lend themselves to the creation of given names. Giving brand names and pseudonyms is blocked because of copyright issues, while the use of surnames and toponyms is only supported for names that can historically be traced to given names. For example, *Betlen*, which has been used in Hungarian both as a surname and a toponym, goes back to the biblical toponym *Bethlehem,* but its use as a given name has been allowed because, in the Middle Ages, it was used as a male name. Examples of this type are typically male names (e.g., *Apaj*, *Pázmány*) since the feature to be highlighted in a byname (the antecedent of a surname) must have been male-line descent or the name of the landowner in patriarchal societies. In terms of the name set of today, creating given names from toponyms and surnames that are based on medieval given names is a category change, while in terms of the entire history of Hungarian names is an example of re-creation. (This difference is reflected by the fact that laypeople, when applying for such a name, refer to these as existing surnames or toponyms, while their medieval use as given names is unknown to them.)

These examples illustrate the fact that there are no clear-cut boundaries between categories and also how the scope of the diachronic perspective (the past fifty years vs more than a thousand) can also influence categorisation.

6.1.2. Re-created given names

These names were in existence in the Middle Ages but then disappeared from the given name set, possibly surviving as common words or surnames or toponyms. They reappeared in the given name set as a result of individual appeals supported by the Given Name Committee. Many of these were actually used by persons in history, while others are only documented in chronicles, presumably as fictional names made up by the authors (e.g., *Doboka*, *Magor*, *Zalán*). Names adopted from Turkic languages in the Middle Ages are also listed here because their re-creation, i.e. the last stage of their creation as names happened in Hungarian (e.g., *Bojta*, *Jutocsa*, *Turul*, *Vata*).

Since several orthographic versions of these names have been preserved, their making it into the contemporary given name set has brought about their standardisation, even if some of them feature on the list of registrable names in several orthographic versions. It should be noted, however, that only items in this subset can be reliably separated from those created through category change, where the same word does not feature as a common word or a proper name of another type.

6.1.3. Name-building

This involves the creation of given names using morphological, syntactic and other methods affecting their form.

6.1.3.1. Compounding

Combining several names into one presumably follows foreign examples in Hungarian. The equivalents of *Annamária*, compounded from the existent names *Anna* and *Mária*, can be found in many languages and was, presumably, adopted and not newly coined in Hungarian. Modelled after these, however, new compounds have appeared in the name set (e.g., *Anna + Bori > Annabori*, *Anna + Karina > Annakarina*; *Emma + Róza > Emmaróza*; *Hanna + Liza > Hannaliza*). By far, the most popular first component is *Anna*, while among the second components, *Róza* seems to be the most common. This method of name creation has recently become quite productive. It, however, is never used with male names. Neither does it ever occur by combining the given name of the mother and the father because the law requires given names to correspond to their bearers' sex.

6.1.3.2. Suffixation

Most of the given names created through this method have the highly productive diminutive suffix *-ka/-ke* (variants according to vowel harmony).[5]
One typical subset involves adding this suffix to common words, resulting in a given name, not a common word, characteristically in the case of female names (e.g., *áldás* 'blessing' > *Áldáska*, *harmat* 'dew, rorid' > *Harmatka, szeder* 'mulberry' > *Szederke, tavasz* 'springtime' > *Tavaszka*). The majority of these featured in the name dictionary as early as 1971, even if they were only present sporadically in the name stock before the regulation of the name set. Recently, however, this creation method has not been very popular, as common words typically turn into given names through simple category change, without suffixation.
Another typical subset is formed by the female equivalents of existent male names (male name > female name, e.g., *Ajtony > Ajtonka*, *Hunor > Hunóra* and *Hunorka*, *Zalán > Zalánka*). The demand behind this mechanism

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5   Hypocoristics of both gender can be created using *-ka/-ke*. However, it was used by neologists to create female pairs of male names in the 19th century, and due to analogy it gained a new possible function as a suffix for the creation of female names.

is that there are no unisex names in Hungarian, while similar male and female name pairs serve as such after the model provided in the shared global given name set of the Christian world.

6.1.3.3. Back-formation

As with common words, back-formation is a fairly infrequent method in the case of given names. It was very frequent in the Middle Ages (e.g., *Petrus > Pet*), especially with the addition of diminutive suffixes (e.g., *Pet + -e > Pete*, *Pet + -ő > Pető*). Today but a handful of new names, originally born from the suffixation of common words, are created through back-formation, losing the above-mentioned *-ka/-ke* diminutive suffix (*Hajnalka > Hajnal* 'dawn', *Angyalka > Angyal* 'angel', *Reményke > Remény* 'hope'). This method mainly involves female names (as in the examples above) because the *-ka/-ke* diminutive suffix usually appears in them, with just a handful of exceptions (e.g., *Áldáska* female name *> Áldás* male name).

The majority of male names created through a kind of back-formation was formed by taking away the Latin ending (with Hungarian orthography) *-usz* or *-iusz* (e.g., *Hiláriusz > Hilár*, *Juliánusz > Julián*, *Libóriusz > Libor*). The process is similar to the way numerous male names were created in the Middle Ages (e.g., *Benedictus > Benedek*, *Martinus > Márton*), so the method can be considered to follow this analogy. The same process happened in numerous European languages, so these could have served as models as well (cf. e.g., French *Julien*, English *Julian*, German *Julian*, Spanish *Julián*).

6.2. New names of foreign origin

In this case, the method of creation is beyond the scope of the present study as these names were adopted with modifications to bring their pronunciation and spelling in line with Hungarian. If any larger morphological or syntactic changes happen in Hungarian, then the resulting names are considered of Hungarian origin, as seen above. In terms of adoption, it is irrelevant whether the equivalent was originally a given name, a hypocoristic, a surname or a toponym. If their adoption is supported by the Given Name Committee due to their usage as given names in another language and culture, then they enter Hungarian as such, without category change (e.g., *Megán*, *Meggi* and *Peggi* from the diminutive forms of English *Margaret*, i.e. *Meghan*, *Maggie* and *Peggy*; *Robinzon*, *Edizon* from English surnames *Edison*, *Robinson*).

Likewise, it is irrelevant if another version of the same name adopted from another language already exists in Hungarian (e.g., *André* from French and *Andrej* from an unspecified Slavic language are registrable besides *András*, adopted from medieval Latin *Andreas*): although diachronically they belong to the same etymological set of names, the latter are to be categorised by their direct donor languages (i.e. by French and Slavic).

In recent decades, given names have been borrowed from numerous languages, making up a greater subset than new given names of Hungarian origin. The following summary highlights languages from which no or hardly any names were adopted in earlier centuries but are among the most common donor languages today.

English must be mentioned first of all because as a world language that has been exerting an ever more powerful cultural influence in Hungary since the political changes in 1989, it has become a constant source of new names (e.g., *Benett*, *Brájen*, *Kevin*, *Timoti*; *Dzsesszika*, *Dzsindzser*, *Emili*, *Glenda*).

A few French names were adopted in the Middle Ages but disappeared by the 15th century. However, several French names have been adopted over later centuries and more recently as well (e.g., *Fremont*, *Misel*, *Noel*; *Fadett*, *Misell*, *Zsorzsett*).

Names recently adopted from Italian are another significant subset (e.g., *Adriánó*, *Enríkó*, *Gzsúlió*; *Allegra*, *Beatricse*, *Fioretta*), as are names adopted from Spanish (e.g., *Diegó*, *Ramón*, *Szantiágó*; *Manolita*, *Milágrosz*, *Pilár*). These languages are sometimes equally plausible sources of identical name forms (e.g., *Robertó*).

In the Middle Ages, several names were adopted from Turkic languages, which, however, disappeared from the name stock by the 15th century. In the 21st century, Turkish and Arabic names have entered the name set in significant numbers (e.g., *Burak*, *Dzsamal*, *Harun*; *Aziza*, *Rüja*, *Zejnep*). Also, predominantly over the last two decades, several Hindi and Sanskrit names have become registrable (e.g., *Baladéva*, *Gópál*, *Krisna*; *Laksmi*, *Móhini*, *Szávitri*).

6.3. New names from orthographic and pronunciation variants

The creation methods described under new given names of Hungarian origin above can be observed in connection with common words as well, while this category only exists among personal names because its existence is explained not by linguistic but legal factors. According to current legislation, if there is but one phoneme's worth of difference between a registrable name and a proposed variant, the latter must be considered a separate name and must be approved by the Given Name Committee. This category is not addressed under names of Hungarian origin because it contains names of both Hungarian and foreign origin. For example, a male name of Hungarian origin, *Zekő*, registrable since 1971, alongside a newer version, *Zeke*; or a male name of foreign origin, *Marcel*, added to the previously registrable version, *Marcell*.

Some of these variants are certainly Hungarian developments, such as the newly registrable Hungarian spelling variants of names originally adopted with the foreign spelling before regulation (e.g., *Melchior* and *Melhior*, *Richárd* and *Rihárd*; the latter are the new adoptions). Another typical method is making variants created on the basis of different interpretations of data from medieval

sources registrable (e.g., *Géza* and *Décse*, *Gyécsa*; *Kadicsa* and *Kadisa*, *Kadocsa*, *Kadosa*; *Enéh* and *Ené*, *Fehéra* and *Fehére*).

There are examples among both names of foreign and Hungarian origin for changes in the duration of vowels or consonants, resulting in spelling variants (consonants, e.g., *Attila* and *Atilla*, *Kamill* and *Kamil*; *Anabell* and *Anabel*, *Hargita* and *Hargitta*; vowels, e.g., *Líviusz* and *Liviusz*, *Énók and Énok*; *Alóma and Aloma*, *Patrícia* and *Patricia*). In numerous cases, there are several changes within the same name, or there are more than two registrable versions (e.g., *Ruben*, *Rúben* and *Ruven*, *Taddeus* and *Tadeusz*; *Daniella*, *Daniela* and *Daniéla*).

7. The sources of new names in the past fifty years

According to their source, given names can be considered fictional and non-fictional. Names of both Hungarian and foreign origin can be found among non-fictional names. Names popularised in the Hungarian public through written sources mentioning historical characters (mostly from antiquity) are a common type of foreign names and, as such, are somewhere in between the fictional and non-fictional categories (e.g., *Horáciusz*, *Miltiádész*; *Agrippína*). Some names entered the name set due to the popularity of global celebrities in modern times (e.g., *Marlon*; *Sakira*). Various cultures can mediate the names of various languages, such as names of Spanish or Portuguese origin through Latin American soap operas, or names of Arabic or Turkish origin (besides immigration) from Turkish soap operas widely popular throughout the 2010s.

Numerous names that were originally borne by literary characters can be listed in the fictional category. Those of Hungarian origin include *Berzsián*, *Maminti* and *Bóbita* (from Hungarian children's literature), etc. Those of foreign origin include *Aramisz* and *Atosz* (A. Dumas), *Aragorn*, *Árven*, *Frodó* (J.R.R. Tolkien) and *Deneris* (G.R.R. Martin). As the latter examples demonstrate, some names can either come from literature or from film. Names from Sumerian (*Anki*, *Gilgames*), Egyptian (*Aton*, *Ozirisz*) and German (*Odin*, *Votan*) mythology are outnumbered by ancient Greek and Roman names (e.g., *Achillesz*, *Árész*, *Zeusz*; *Androméda*, *Euridiké*, *Médeia*). The names of Hindi and Sanskrit origin usually come from Hindu mythology and became registrable following appeals by parents who are Krishna conscious devotees. If the Bible is considered a mythological source, it bears mentioning that recently several Hebrew name forms that had previously been widespread in their Latinate form have become registrable, alongside Biblical names that had not been in use before (e.g., *Elihú*, *Itiel*, *Melkisédek*; *Jiszka*, *Kecia*, *Tikva*). For the majority of this subset, the applicants were parents of Jewish backgrounds.

It is also to be noted that some fictional names feature in the non-fictional name set of certain cultures and languages as well; thus, these categories, according to the source of new names, are not easily demarcated.

8. The dynamics of name set and name stock changes

Having seen a possible categorisation of new given names, the diachronic aspects of the topic will be discussed in the following.

Figure 1 shows how the name set has grown since 1971 (Ladó's given name dictionary) until September 2020. In the almost three decades preceding the publication of the revised edition of Ladó's dictionary (Ladó & Bíró 1998), the female name set overtook the male name set, and the gap has been increasing ever since.
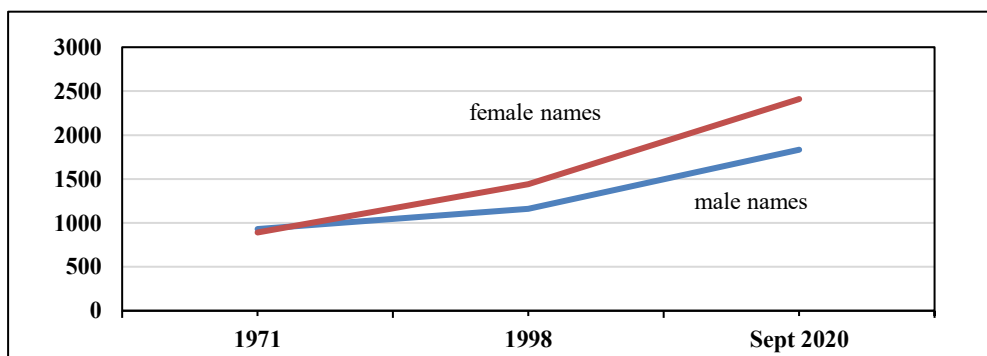

Figure 1: The increase of the name set by sex (1971 – Sept 2020) (Vertical axis: number of registrable names)[6]

It is also worth examining the rate at which the name stock has been changing in the given period, also divided by sex, alongside the changes of the name set. Figures 2 and 3 show the average frequency of the top hundred names for newborns and the entire population, based on population registry data (PopReg. 2003–2019).
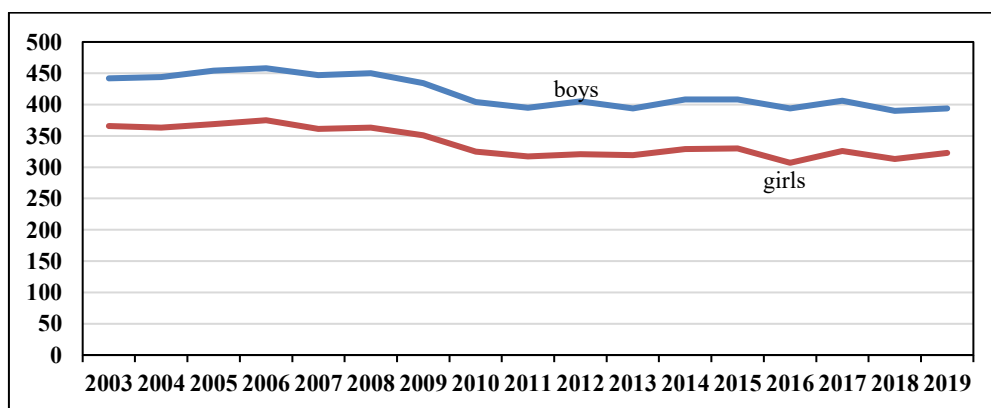

Figure 2: The average frequency of top hundred names for newborns by sex (2003–2019) (Vertical axis: number of name bearers)

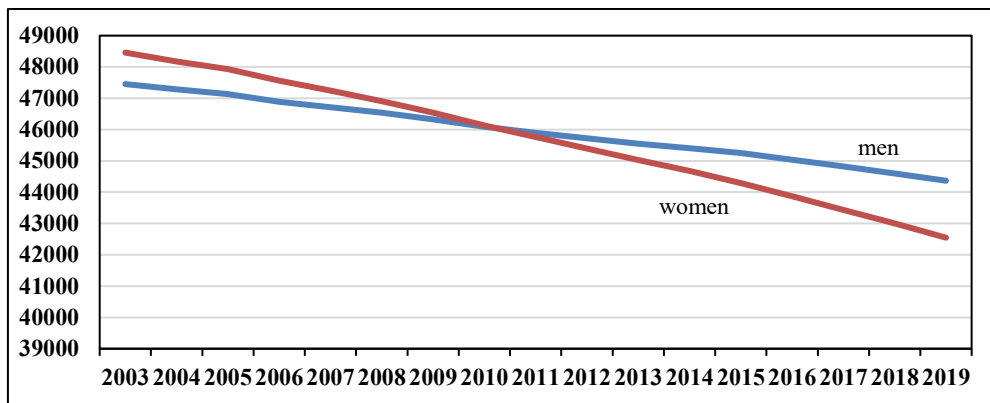[6]   We express our thanks to Anna Liza Pallagi for the data.

Figure 3: The average frequency of top hundred names for the entire population by sex (2003–2019) (Vertical axis: the number of name bearers)

Since the average frequency of names for male newborns has been steadily higher for the past 15 years, 2011 saw a change in the top hundred names of the entire population: before that, the average frequency of male names tended to be lower than that of women's names, since then it has been higher. This means that the female name stock has become more varied than the male one, even if this process has lagged behind the change in the name set.

Research into the frequency of only the top ten names (Table 1) shows this as well: while in the cohort born between 1920 and 1945, the average frequency of female names was much higher, this trend changed in the next generation, with the diversity of the name set rapidly increasing for both sexes (Raátz 2016: 345–348).

Table 1: The percentage of bearers of the top ten names within the entire population by sex (based on Raátz 2016: 345–348)

Born between	Male name bearers (%)	Female name bearers (%)
1920–1945	59	80
1946–1964	60	50
2010–2016	25	21

The change, naturally, involves not only the addition of new names but some names losing their popularity and dropping out of the top hundred. To analyse this, the top hundred list of the entire population and that of newborns for 2003 and 2019 are compared. Figure 4 shows that changes are happening at a faster rate in the female name stock: already in 2003, there were fewer female names in the group of names that featured both on the top hundred list of the entire population and among newborns. Since then, this gap has widened. A good indication of this is the fact that while the top twenty male names of the entire population all featured on the top hundred list of names given to newborns in 2019, at the same time, eighteen out of the top twenty female names of the entire population did not make it onto the newborn top hundred. That is, several names that have been in use for centuries have lost much of their popularity precisely because they are regarded as traditional and rather frequent. And, as another general phenomenon in Europe, boys' naming seems to be the more conservative (cf. Gerritzen 2006: 180).
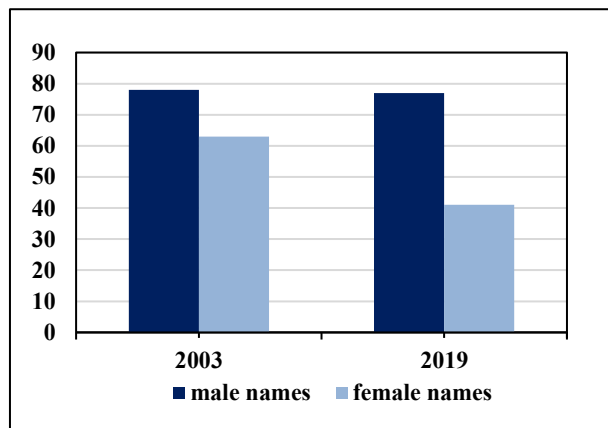
Figure 4: The number of names featuring both in the top hundred of the entire population and newborns (2003 and 2019, based on PopReg. 2003–2019)

In the following, the changes will be exemplified with a group of etymologically related names chosen from the female and the male name set (based on PopReg. 2003–2019). Their equivalents are typically among the most popular names of contemporary Western cultures (cf. e.g., Caffarelli & Gerritzen 2002).

A typical method of expanding the name set is when along with existent ones, new variants of the same name become registrable. *Zsófia* ('Sophie') has been used since the Middle Ages, but now *Szófia*, *Szofi* and *Szofia* have also become registrable. As Figure 5 presents, the new variants appeared on the newborn top hundred list in close proximity to one another and showed steady growth. In the meantime, the frequency of *Zsófia* is dropping slightly as a consequence of the above-mentioned decrease in the average frequency of the top hundred female names. However, this has hardly affected its position on the list.
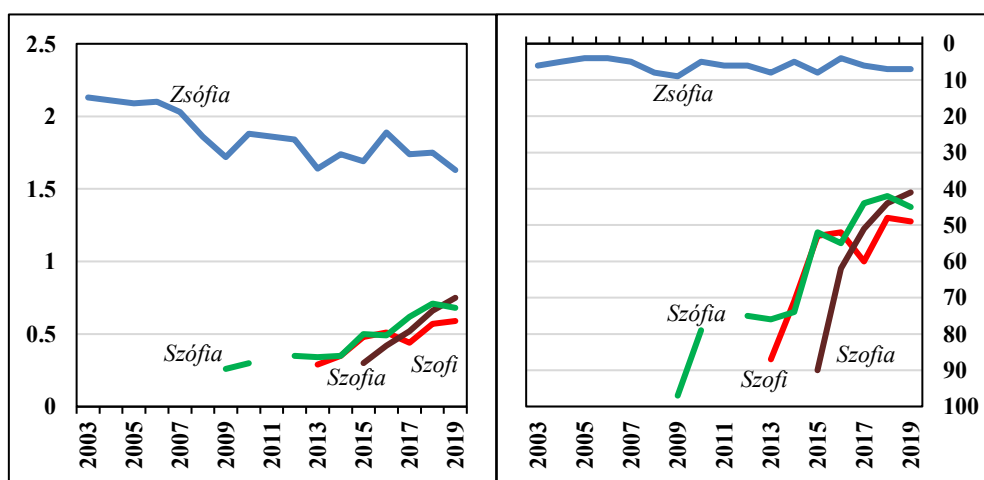

Figure 5: The frequency of *Zsófia*, *Szófia*, *Szofi* and *Szofia* (%, left) and their positions (right) in the top hundred names of newborns (2003–2019)

In contrast, *Sándor* ('Alexander'), which has also been part of the Hungarian given name stock since the Middle Ages, as Figure 6 presents, has been steadily losing its popularity, lagging behind its more recently adopted version, *Alex* since 2016. At the same time, *Alexander*, another newly adopted version of *Sándor*, is far less popular than either (presumably because of its length).
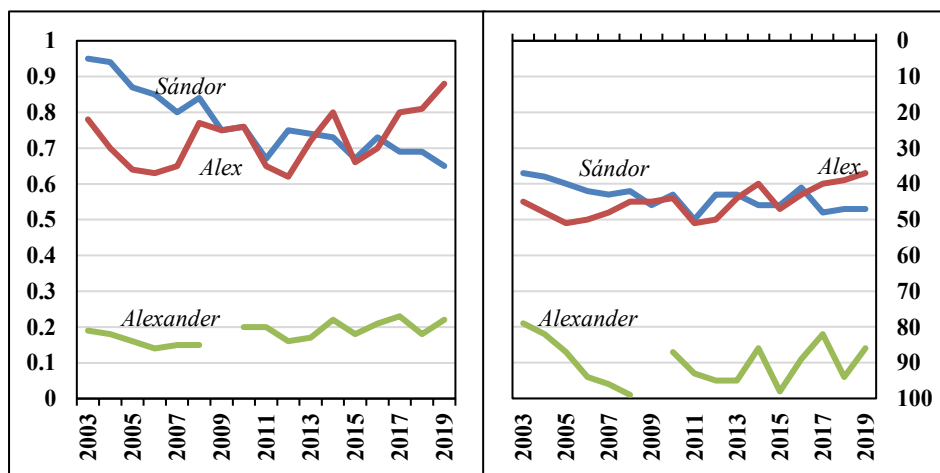
Figure 6: The frequency of *Sándor*, *Alex* and *Alexander* (%, left) and their positions (right) in the top hundred names of newborns (2003–2019)

The popularity of newer versions of *Zsófia* and the name *Alexander* in the newborn cohort, however, has not yet propelled them into the top hundred of the entire population, while *Alex* has already made it, even if its popularity is still well behind that of *Sándor* (Figure 7).
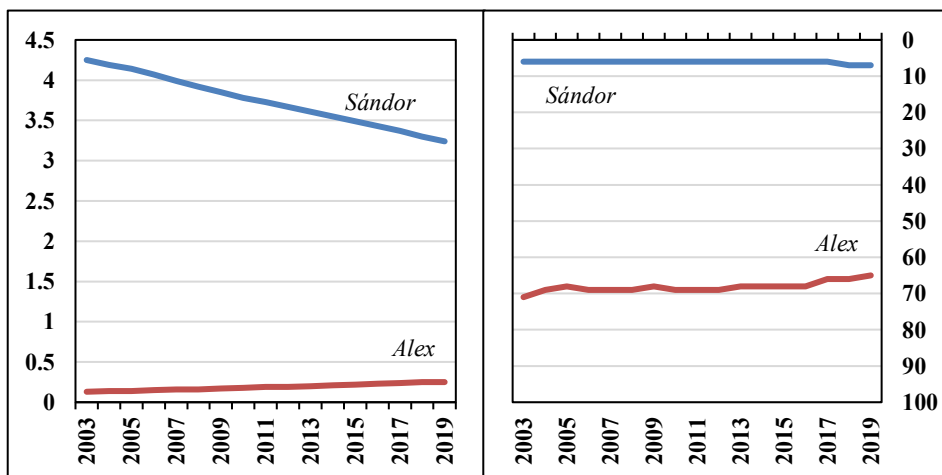
Figure 7: The frequency of *Sándor* and *Alex* (%, left) and their positions (right) in the top hundred names of newborns (2003–2019)

The name *Sándor* and its variants also provide a good example, as Figure 8 presents, for the process whereby traditional names become less popular as first given names, but are given as second names (e.g., to pass them on), while names perceived as trendier are given as first given names (not only in Hungary, cf. Bloothooft & Onland 2016: 16–17).
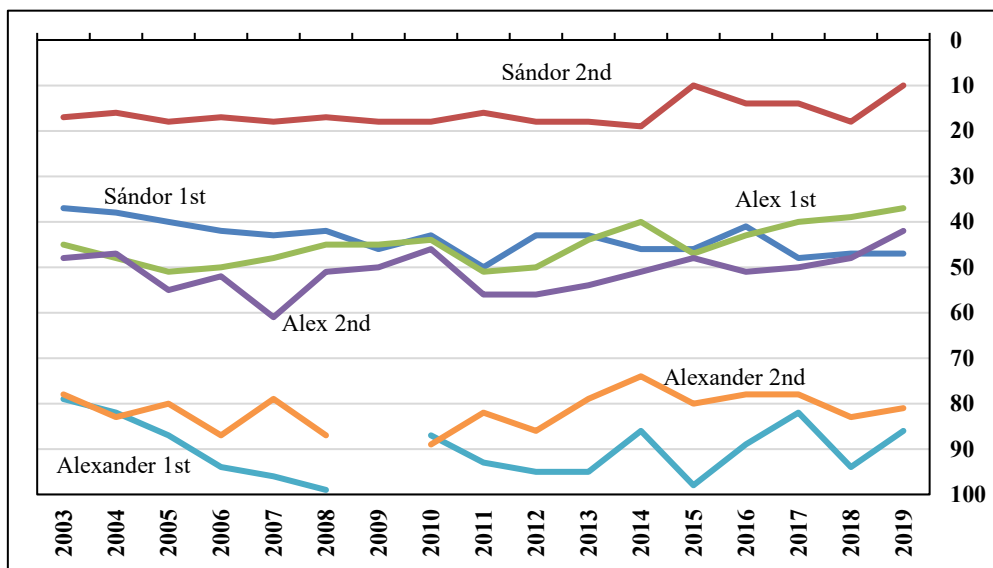

Figure 8: The position of *Sándor, Alex* and *Alexander* as first and second names in the top hundred names of newborns (2003–2019)[7]

9. Summary

After centuries of relative stability, the Hungarian given name set and name stock have undergone significant changes since the 19th century, and the speed of these changes has steadily increased over the past fifty years. The circle of donor languages has widened, new variations of extant given names have appeared continuously, mostly from two sources: from Hungarian hypocoristics and foreign equivalents. As a result, the given name stock today is more diverse in terms of linguistic origin and source than at any time since the end of the Middle Ages. At the same time, the given name set is smaller than it was in medieval times when it was open, as opposed to today's semi-closed set, the result of official regulation and limited expandability. The male and female name sets change to a different extent and at a different rate, in partly different ways, and so do female and male name stocks. These phenomena show several similarities with the changes detected elsewhere in the Western culture group.

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[7]   Since frequency lists only contain data for first given names in the top hundred, we can only compare the position of these names as second names and cannot give their position on the entire list of second names by frequency.

The documented changes are mostly explained by socio-cultural factors. Individualisation, globalisation, the expanding reach of mass media, the Internet and popular culture all affect the considerations behind name choices today. The current legislative background concerning the adoption of newly created or discovered names into the set of registrable names, however, provides a regulated framework for the ongoing expansion of the Hungarian given name set.

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