EVOLUTION AND MAJOR FEATURES OF HUNGARIAN SHORT FORM COUNTRY NAMES

1. The subject has gained special attention following two cases of the Hungarian Committee on Geographical Names (HCGN) concerning possible changes of country names suggested for use in Hungarian. In both instances the list of country names were slightly modified. The paper looks into the background of these rulings with their linguistic, historical and other related aspects.

2. The common noun *'ország' (land, country)*

The common noun *'ország'* has carried the unique meaning in Hungary since earliest times of a territorial unit organized by a state/administrative authority with equal jurisdiction of this state on the given territory.

A Hungarian explanatory (Magyar Értelmező Szótár) gives the popular definition: A state organization on a well-defined area together with the territory, natural resources, buildings/structures and population therein.

Through etymology we have the meaning of *uru (Hungarian 'úr' /(land)lord/) + -szág (modern Hung. -ság /an abstract concept-forming suffix/* as a larger territory under the authority of a headman. With a subsequent change in meaning it evolved as: organized territory

Name of population (demonym) + 'ország' (country) name compounds form the basic layer of Hungarian country names.

As a result the Hungarian name of the country is *Magyarország*.

The HCGN list of country names now contains 17 countries with their names formed with the word *ország*:

Csehország	Czechia	Lettország	Latvia
Észtország	Estonia	Németország	Germany
Fehéroroszország	Belarus	Olaszország	Italy
Finnország	Finland	Oroszország	Russia
Franciaország	France	Örményország	Armenia
Görögország	Greece	Spanyolország	Spain
Horvátország	Croatia	Svédország	Sweden
Írország	Ireland	Törökország	Turkey
Lengyelország	Poland		

All of them are either European countries or such that had played important roles (like Turkey) in the history of Europe and were formed (except Lettország/Latvia)

several centuries ago. Armenians have lived in the Pannonian Basin since the foundation of the Kingdom of Hungary, although their settlement in sizeable numbers was recorded in the 17th century. It is the most distant country with its Hungarian name having the constituent -ország.

In pre-Turkish times Bulgaria also featured in Hungarian documents as *Bolgárország.* Other, now obsolete names include Dánország (now Dánia/Denmark/) and Angolország (present Anglia/England/)

Names of some states, major regions that are now parts of larger independent countries retain the old linguistic evolution in Hungarian:

Alsó-Szászország	Lower Saxony		Stájerország	Styria
Bajorország	Bavaria		Szászország	Saxony
Morvaország	Moravia			

In colloquial Hungarian other regions have had this type of compound with the word -*ország,* e.g. *Erdélyország* (Transylania) instead of the usual *Erdély,* or *Somogyország* for the name of the Hungarian county properly called *Somogy,* as this form could in a way pronounce significance or size. The compound words with '-*ország'* are are strongly embedded in abstract contents and literary environment:

menyország	heaven		Görbeország	dombos vidék'
Alice Csodaországban	Alice in Wonderland		Kompország	Nyugat és Kelet között ingázás

Onomastic evolution with the word -ország is no longer active among toponyms, it may well have come to an end. Chances are that Latvia ('Lettország') was the last such compound, which is just 100 years old.

It is important to note that structures consisting of a *demonym attribute + ország* are always written in one word. When an existing toponym gets a distinctive attribute, the resulting new country name will be a hyphenated compound in Hungarian: *Nagy-Britannia (Great Britain), Új-Zéland (New Zealand), Egyenlítői-Guinea (Equatorial Guinea), Alsó-Szászország (Lower Saxony* stb. Later on its significance will be elaborated in the case of *Fehéroroszország.*

3. The impact on Hungarian toponyms of the Latin derivational suffix –*ia* The Latin name of the country is *Hungaria* and this is the name most modern languages have derived theirs of Hungary. The Hungarian transcription of this Latin word is widely known (*Hungária*), and it is a sort of synonym of *Magyarország*. There are

examples fairytale country names of this structure in the world of Hungarian folk tales, evolving through the vernacular of the people of the countryside: *Óperencia, Bergengócia* stb.

A second layer of Hungarian country names was formed by names with the suffix -*ia*, either coming directly from Latin or through intermediary languages, from international loan words:

Albánia	Albania		Malajzia	Malaysia
Ausztrália	Australia		Mikronézia	Micronesia
Ausztria	Ausztria		Namíbia	Namibia
Bolívia	Bolivia		Norvégia	Norway
Dánia	Denmark		Portugália	Portugal
Hollandia	(the) Nederlands		Románia	Romania
India	India		Szíria	Syria
Líbia	Libya		Szlovákia	Slovakia
Litvánia	Lithuania		Szlovénia	Slovenia

There are both old and new, near and far lying countries.

All Hungarian names listed here have their foreign-name parallel forms. There are 34 such names of independent countries.

Country names formed with the suffix -*ia* are always adapted to the Hungarian recording of sounds (to Hungarian alphabet), e.g. accents marking elongated vowels occur in high numbers in names of present and past regions, provinces.

Andalúzia	Andalusia		Lombardia	Lombardy
Anglia	England		Lotaringia	Lorraine
Burgundia	Burgundy		Normandia	Normandy
Dalmácia	Dalmacia		Olténia	Oltenia
Galícia	Galicia		Szilézia	Silesia
Kasztília	Castile		Szlavónia	Slavonia

There are several exceptions from Hungarian-adapted spellings in this set: Calabria, Liguria, Pennsylvania.

4. Unique country names

There are of course a large number of country names not belonging to any of the types above. Without being able to explain all cases, some specific features are elaborated below.

a) there is a distinction in rendering names of countries where the Roman alphabet is used from those applying a non-Roman script;
   aa) country names from earlier times generally acquired forms adapted to Hungarian: Kanada, Svájc, Mexikó, Új-Zéland, Argentína, Kuba, Dominika;
   ab) names of Roman-script countries of more recent appearance are usually used unchanged in Hungarian : Costa Rica, Chile, Jamaica, Suriname, Salvador, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Guyana, Malawi,
b) names of countries using non-Roman scripts generated Hungarian exonyms :
   ba) names of the earlier layer resulted in traditional exonyms: Japán, Kína, Korea, Szudán,
   bb) more recent names acquired spellings corresponding to Hungarian pronunciation: Azerbajdzsán, Kambodzsa, Szingapúr, Nepál, Pakisztán, Banglades, Tádzsikisztán, Bhután.
   As a matter of fact, no sharp boundary is possible to be drawn between traditional and more recent names.
c) generic terms and attributes of geography as well as conjunctions are gererally translated: Új-Zéland, Kelet-Timor, Egyenlítői-Guinea, Seychelle-szigetek, Trinidad és Tobago.
d) In the 20th century the common noun '*föld*' (land) began to take over the meaning of '*ország*' for both countries and ragions, provinces: Thaiföld, Szváziföld /Swaziland/; Baszkföld, Komiföld /Komi Republic/,

5. Accepted name changes in the past 25 years – at the request of the relevant country:

The new name of *Burma* changed to *Mianmar* in Hungarian. HCGN ruled that Burma had not been an organic part of Hungarian geographical vocabulary, the language would not be damaged by applying one loan word instead of another. It was important to consider that the country itself used the local equivalent of the new name.

6. Name changes not supported in the past 25 years – at the request of the relevant country

a) *Elefántcsontpart >< Côte d'Ivoire*: HCGN decided that the Hungarian exonym has an embedded meaning as a compound common name, while the French term is incompatible with Hungarian script without the possibility to generate attributive forms.
b) *Grúzia >< Georgia*: HCGN ruled that the form Grúzia is deeply rooted in Hungarian both in historical and liteary records, the adjective *grúz* is frequently used as personal names (surname), products . The proposed

name form would be identical with a state of the United States, and was open to mistake in its pronounced form. The name form Georgia is not used in the relevant country (note Georgian *Sakartvelo*), thus the request was a sort of interference in the Hungarian language.

c) *Szvázíföld><Eswatini*: HCGN ruled that the Hungarian form *Szvázíföld* was a perfect equivalent of both the English *Swaziland* and the name *eSwatini* of the swati language, so there was no need to change the Hungarian name with the English form losing its validity. The forms *eSwatini/Eswatini* do not fit into Hungarian without problems and generated correct attributive terms were not possible.

d) *Fehéroroszország >< Belarusz*: The demonym '*fehérorosz*' (Belorussian) and the country name '*Fehéroroszország*' had an almost 500-year old history of records in the Hungarian language, with exclusive use before 1945. During the Soviet times Hungarians got used to the Russian forms of *belorusz* (adjective) and *Belorusszia* (country), while the word *Belarusz* only meant a brand name for a popular Soviet-made tractor. Generated new terms, attributive forms would involve problems in Hungarian. The present name with the suffix -*ország* reflect long-standing intensive historical contacts. It was revealed as background information that the second part of the name (-*oroszország*) is identical with that of Russia, something that would be desirable to avoid due to questions of national identification. In fact the compound form expressly refers to the demonym+geographic common noun (*Fehérorosz+ország*). Had Russia been given the attribute 'fehér' /white/, it would have resulted by Hungarian orthography in the mandatory form of Fehér-Oroszország.

Summary
There isn't and has never been in history a standard set of citeria in Hungarian to render all country names of the world (like transcriptions)
Present country names reflect
  a) the age of appearing in the Hungarian language
  b) the intensity of historical and cultural contacts,
  c) the vehicular/intermediary language/s,
  d) the adaptation to the Hungarian language by different ages,
  e) the time of independence of the relevant country,
  f) the script of the official language being Roman or non-Roman,
  g) the meanig of the name,
  h) the recognition of the name in the relevant country.