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The Rendering of the Geographical Name of Great Britain in 19th Century Croatian Newspapers

Proper nouns and geographical names make a special category in linguistic borrowing, because they are borrowed most frequently.¹ English geographical names are in modern standard Serbo-Croatian more or less fixed in pronunciation as in spelling. During the formation of early standard Croatian the rendering of English geographical names was very unsettled and there were no fixed (standard) forms for their rendering.

The material I used for this study are the earliest Croatian newspapers *Kraglski Dalmatin*, and *Narodne novine* the first Croatian newspaper and *Danica ilirska* the first Croatian weekly issued in Zagreb, during the first five years of publication, that is from 1835 to 1840.²

The first Croatian newspapers started to come out in the first half of the 19th century, and the language of their articles is the early standard Croatian, in which foreign names were rendered in various ways mostly differing from present-day usage.

The following geographical expressions and names, which are fixed in contemporary usage, were by no means so in the early 19th century.

Great Britain today *Velika Britanija* is a loan-translation of the title, with the Latin form of the proper noun spelt according to the rules of present Serbo-Croatian orthography.

¹ Hermann Paul »*Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*«, Halle, 1909, p. 393

² *Il regio Dalmata — Kraglski Dalmatin*, Zadar 1806—1810. *Novine horvatsko-slavonske i dalmatinske* (Narodne novine), Zagreb 1835—1849. *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* (Danica ilirska), Zagreb 1835—1849.

England Serbo-Croatian Engleska

is an adapted form of the original, actually again a loan-translation without the generic part of the name, i. e. *land*, which was left out for the sake of speech economy.¹ The full name would be: *Engleska zemlja* (the English land), *Engleska* being an adjective derived from the foreign stem *Engl-*, with the Serbo-Croatian suffix *-ska* (used to form adjectives with the meaning »belonging to«), feminine in concord with the omitted noun *zemlja*, which is feminine. Such an adjective, used without a noun and more or less converted into a noun, is very frequently used to denote a country, e. g. *Francuska* — France, *Španjolska* — Spain.

Engleska often does not refer merely to England, but to Great Britain as a whole.

Scotland in present usage Škotska

is rendered on the same principle as *Engleska*, with the Croatian spelling and the sound [ʃ] instead of the original [s] at the beginning of the word, which might be due to German influence (German: *Schottland*).

Wales appears either as Wales or Vels

which is the spelling for the modified pronunciation: [w] not existing in Serbo-Croatian, the nearest sound is used, i. e. the voiced labiodental fricative [v], the usage of which is due to the spelling pronunciation probably on the German model. The diphthong [ei] is also lacking in Serbo-Croatian, and so is replaced by a simple close [e].

Ireland is rendered according to the same pattern as *England*, that is, with the feminine adjective *Irska* converted into a noun.

During the early period of modern Croatian (first half of the 19th century) the rendering of loan-words and foreign names was in a formative stage, as was indeed the standard language itself. So it is not surprising that Croatian forms of geographical names varied considerably until they became fixed in the late eighteen thirties. The varying forms found in use between 1806 and 1840 were frequently a result of the influence of German, Italian or Hungarian, which were the commonest intermediaries through which English words came into Croatian.

The earliest geographical expressions for *the United Kingdom* are chronologically as follows:

Ottoci Britanski (the British Isles)

This is a compound geographical name, with the generic part (a masculine substantive in plural) preceding the specific part (an adjective, meaning »belonging to«, in concord with the

¹ M. Arousseau: *The Rendering of Geographical Names*, London 1957.

substantive). This word order is the reverse of the English word order, but is not common in Croatian either, so it is probably due to Italian influence.

Otôkâ Brittanskih (delle Isole Britanniche)¹

The spelling also follows the Italian model, as the newspaper *Kraglski Dalmatin* was issued in Napoleon's Dalmatia, which was still under Venetian administration. The newspaper was published simultaneously in Italian and Croatian, the Croatian text being a mere translation of the Italian. The spelling is inconsistent nevertheless, so there can be found the same example, but here *Britanski* is spelt with one »t«, and the generic part is without a capital »O« as if it were a common noun:

»Varhu upside otoka Britanskih«.²

A similar expression occurs in *Danica ilirska*:

»Vu veliko-britanzkom otoku predmet dnevnoga spomenika je O'Connel.«³

Veliko-britanzki otok — the Island of Great Britain is a compound adjective consisting of the adjective *veliko* (great) with an *o*-stem, and the adjective *britanzki* in concord with the noun »otok« (singular, masculine). Here the word order is regular, the spelling modelled on the Hungarian orthography, which was followed throughout 1835. At the end of that year the reform was carried out which established the spelling as it remained, in general, to the present day.

An interesting example from *Narodne novine* is:

»vu szevernih ztranaH otoka (Insule) . . .«⁴

and

»Proti ovomu otoku (insuli)«⁵

Here *otok* (island) is used without the specific part to denote the *Island of Great Britain*, similar to the usage in Britain. In brackets follows an explanation of the word in Latin. In present-day usage »otok« does not mean *Great Britain*, but any island, and I believe the same can be said of the 19th century usage, because these two examples are the only ones to be found in the texts examined. The instance can be accounted for by the literal translation of the news from an English or German newspaper.

¹ *Kraglski Dalmatin* I/1806, 25, p. 197

² *Kraglski Dalmatin* II/1807, 9, p. 64

³ *Danica ilirska* I/1835, 11, p. 43

⁴ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 3, p. 9

⁵ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 16, p. 61

The poetical name for Great Britain *Albion*, occurs only twice¹ and it has not undergone any modifications.

The title: *United Kindom of Great Britain and Ireland* never occurs as a whole, but only either the first or the second part of it.

The *United Kingdom* was found as a loan translation: *sojedinjeno kraljevstvo* only once.²

Great Britain and Ireland is the form that is used most frequently.

»za cestitost od vellike Bretagne«³

Vellika Bretagna is a compound name; the adjective *Great* is translated and in concord with the noun which is feminine and in its Italian form.

In nothern Croatian the most frequent form is:

*Velika Britania*⁴

or spelt: *Velika Brittania*⁵, which once again shows in consistency in spelling.

As mentioned above *Britania* is of Latin origin. Twice it is found alone without the adjective *Great*⁶.

Very often *Ireland* is included too, and thus the title is *Velika Britania i Irska*.

Irska for *Ireland*, the form common in present usage, appeared first in 1836⁷ and has been in use ever since. In the beginning the form *Irzka*⁸ was used, which is the same as the above mentioned form, only with the old spelling used before 1836. The earliest form in *Narodne novine* is: *Velika Britania i Irlandia*.⁹

Irlandia is the adapted form of *Ireland*. The form without »e« is according to the conventional European usage for this noun, plus the feminine suffix — ia, which forms names of countries on the Latin model.

Twice the names *Irlandia* and *Irzka* were used side by side and each time one of them was used in brackets to explain the other:

¹ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 13

Narodne novine I/1835, 28

² *Narodne novine* II/1836, 15, p. 57

³ *Kraglski Dalmatin* II/1807, 52, p. 403

Kraglski Dalmatin III/1808, 1, p. 1

⁴ *Narodne novine* I/1835 to *Narodne novine* VI/1840

⁵ *Narodne novine* V/1839, 90, p. 335.

⁶ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 13

⁷ *Narodne novine* II/1836, 4 and onwards

⁸ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 8, p. 25 till *Narodne novine* I/1835, 32, p. 126

⁹ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 3, p. 9 to *Narodne novine* I/1835, 11, p. 4

*Irlandiu (Irzku)*¹

*Irzke (Irlandie)*²

Thus it is possible to watch how the new form *Irzka* replaced the older one, *Irlandia*.

In *Kraglski Dalmatin* the only form in use is the Italian form *Irlanda*, which can also be inflected as a feminine substantive:

»smutgne u Irlandi«³

In only one instance the ancient and poetical name of Ireland *Erin* is used without any adaptations except that it is inflected like a masculine noun:

»szini zelenoga Erina«⁴

Scotland and *Wales* are also rendered in various interesting forms.

In *Kraglski Dalmatin* *Scotland* is rendered in the Italian form *Skoczia*,⁵ a feminine noun, and similarly only differently spelt, in *Danica ilirska: Skocia*.⁶ This is an isolated example, as is *Škocia*,⁷ which is a peculiar mixture of Italian and German forms (š — an imitation of German pronunciation).

The most common form is *Skotzka*,⁸ till after the reform of the spelling, when it became *Skotzka*. This is a loan-translation of the name *Scotland*, with the generic part left out (i. e. land — zemlja) and the feminine adjective, derived from *Scot* and then converted into a substantive.

*Walesia*⁹ is adapted by adding the Latin feminine suffix because it was not so often used as *England* or *Scotland*. Even in modern usage it has not been modified in the way *England* or *Scotland* has.

*Walesia*¹ is adapted by adding the Latin feminine suffix — *ia* and then inflected like other feminine substantives.

Sometimes the English form *Wales* is used.¹⁰

»vu Anglianszkoj y Valiszu«¹¹

In the above example *Valisz* is a masculine substantive, rendered according to the German form *Wallisich*, with the Hungarian spelling,

¹ *Narodne novine* I/1836, 10

² *Narodne novine* I/1835, 11

³ *Kraglski Dalmatin* II/1807, 4, p. 24

⁴ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 60, p. 237—8

⁵ *Kraglski Dalmatin* II/1807, 46, p. 363

⁶ *Danica ilirska* IV/1838, 24, p. 95

⁷ *Narodne novine* II/1836, 50, p. 197

⁸ *Narodne novine* I/1836, 16, p. 61 to *Narodne novine* II/1836, 15.

⁹ *Narodne novine* I/1836, 14, p. 53

¹⁰ *Narodne novine* II/1836, 15, p. 57

¹¹ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 21, p. 82

»po celoj Engleskoj i Walliskojoj«¹

Here *Walliska* is a feminine adjective formed on the pattern of *Engleska*, from the above mentioned German form, and then converted into a noun.

There is also one example of the phonetic spelling of the name *Wales*, adapted to the Croatian phonological system. The lacking bilabial semivowel [w] is replaced by the labiodental fricative [v], also in accordance with the German pronunciation:

»duhovni sudovi po Engleskoj i Valesu«²

The name of *England* also went through several forms before *Englezka* the form it has today was established.

»mir ov France Ingliterom s'koim jest utemeqliena . . .«³

Inglitera is the Venetian form, but more common is the standard Italian form:

*Inghilterra*⁴

None of these expressions refer only to England, but as in contemporary usage to Great Britain as a whole. The same is true of most of the following examples.

»od Anglianzke zemlje«⁵

Here *Anglianzka zemlja* is the only example of the loan-translation of the name *England* where the generic part is not omitted. The adjective *Anglianzka* is a derivation of the Latin name. The most common form throughout 1835 is either merely the adjective *Anglianzka* converted into a noun, or the Latin name *Anglia*, a feminine substantive.

»ter otide z kervavim blagom v Angliu«⁶

In the issues of 1835 there is also one instance of the form *Englezka* (converted feminine adjective, derived from the foreign stem *Engl-*). Since 1836 this form has been used regularly up to the present.

It may refer to England:

»duhovni sudovi po Engleskoj i Valesu«⁷

or to Great Britain:

»Poslê Franklin, kad je njegova hvala već i do Englezke doperla bila, . . . pošte načelnikom . . . učinjen.«⁸

Thus English geographical names are in the early 19th century Croatian mostly adapted both in spelling and in form so

¹ *Danica ilirska* III/1837., 5, p. 19

² *Narodne novine* V/1839, 40, p. 159

³ *Kragliski Dalmatin* II/1806, 6, p. 5

⁴ *Kragliski Dalmatin* II/1807 till IV/1809

⁵ *Narodne novine* I/1835, 5

⁶ *Danica ilirska* I/185, 11, p. 43

⁷ *Narodne novine* V/1839, 40, p. 159

⁸ *Danica ilirska* III/1837,3, p. 11

that nouns ending in a consonant could be inflected as Croatian masculine substantives (*Wales, Vales, Valisz*) and those ending in -a as Croatian feminines (*Englezka, Velika Britania, Škotska, Walesia, Walliska*). Adjectives were derived from English or other foreign stems, with the addition of Croatian suffixes. Designation such as the *British Isles* were translated as a rule. All this holds true of English common nouns as well, except that there is a larger number of foreign words and a larger number of loan-translations, because common nouns are more easily translated than proper nouns. The adaptation in spelling and form is the same, and foreign influence (especially German and Italian) is strongly felt.