

## A SHORT ANALYSIS ON THE STREET NAMES FROM LUGOJ – COMPARATIVE APPROACH BEFORE AND AFTER 1990

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**Abstract.** *A short analysis on the street names from Lugoj – comparative approach before and after 1990.* The municipality of Lugoj has developed among the time through the influences of the different factors, some of them being in the contemporary period imprinted in the cultural landscape of this town. German and Hungarian features are obvious today in the names of Lugoj streets, and more of that, in its physiognomy. In the past, the most of them were characterizing the German part of the town, but due to the fact that this settlement was a real model of interculturality, these were extended also, in the Romanian part of Lugoj. This work try to illustrate periodically the specific toponymes based on the major evolution periods of the town, as the period between 1856 and 1891, the second one, between 1891 and 1920, the third one, between 1920 and 1989 (with the communist specific) and the last one since 1990 to present. At the same time, there are exposed the main criteria that names the streets from Lugoj. In this context, from dyachronical point of view, this paper presents some considerations regarding the lasting and the disappearance of the geographical names and the causes that generated this processes. The study, as a geographical approach, is based on the critical lecture of the references sources, on the various available maps and on the official documents that belong to the local authorities and public institutions. In connection with this part of our research, the comparative method (based on the terrain study reflected by the photos, pictures and other images), shows the differences between the present and the past and the mode in which the urban landscape has been modified by the successive residents generations that have lived in this geographical space.



**Rezumat.** *O analiză sintetică asupra numelor de străzi din municipiul Lugoj – abordare comparativă înainte și după 1990.* De-a lungul timpului, municipiul Lugoj s-a dezvoltat și a evoluat sub impulsul unor factori diferiți a căror influență este reflectată astăzi de peisajul cultural al acestui oraș. Trăsăturile maghiare și cele germane sunt evidente în ceea ce privește evoluția numelor de străzi din Lugoj și, mai mult decât atât, în înfățișarea actuală a spațiului urban. În trecut, acestea erau specifice doar pentru partea germană a municipiului, dar datorită faptului că orașul a evoluat ca un adevărat model de interculturalitate în contexte istorice diferite, elementele alohtone s-au extins și în partea românească a acestei așezări umane. Lucrarea încearcă să ilustreze, din perspectivă spațio-temporală specificul toponimelor, abordarea fiind întreprinsă pe baza etapelor și a perioadelor distincte care au caracterizat evoluția municipiului. Acestea sunt: perioada dintre 1856 și 1891, perioada dintre 1891 și 1920, perioada dintre 1920 și 1989 (cu specificul comunist aferent ei) și perioada care a urmat după căderea regimului comunist. În același timp, sunt expuse și criteriile principale care au stat, și stau încă, la baza denumirii străzilor din Lugoj. În acest context, din punct de vedere diacronic, sunt prezentate unele considerații cu privire la menținerea sau dispariția unor denumiri, precum și cauzele care au generat aceste două procese. Studiul de față, conceput din perspectivă geografică, este fundamentat pe analiza complexă și exhaustivă a unor surse bibliografice semnificative, pe studiul unor hărți, planuri și documente oficiale aflate în patrimoniul autorităților locale. În stransă legătură cu acest demers, adoptarea metodei comparative fundamentată pe analizele directe din teren ilustrează diferențele majore care se individualizează între prezent și trecut precum și modul în care peisajul urban a fost modificat de către generațiile de oameni care au locuit permanent în acest spațiu geografic.

**Mots-clés:** *street names; Lugoj municipality.*

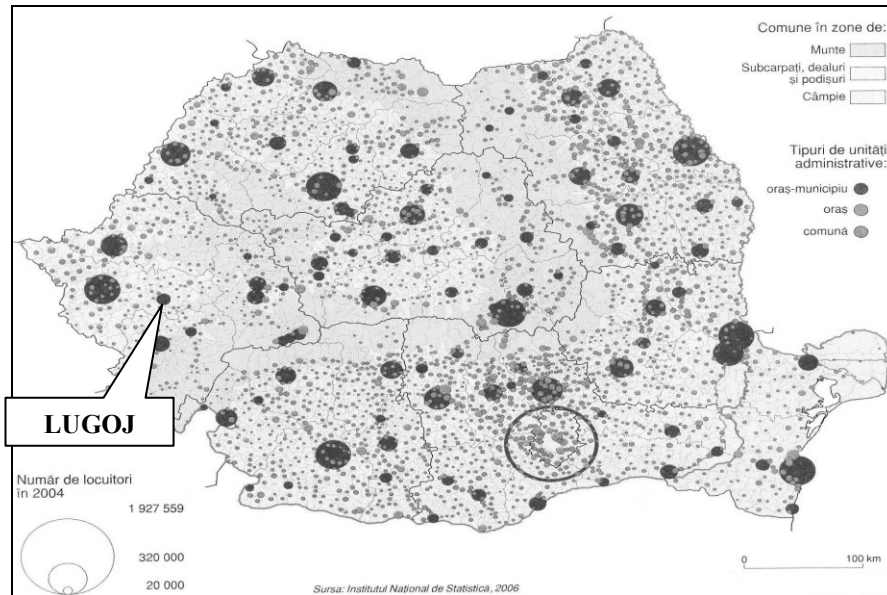
**Cuvinte cheie:** *nume de străzi; municipiul Lugoj.*

## 1. THE GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION OF LUGOJ IN ROMANIA

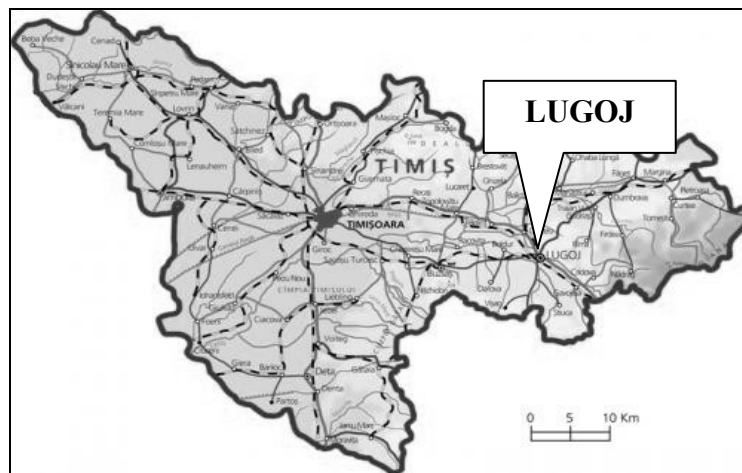
The municipality of Lugoj is situated in the western part of Romania (Figure 1) being, through its social-economical and cultural features one of the most important towns from Banat. At the administrative level it is positioned in the eastern-central part of the Timiș County (Figure 2) being the second most significant town from this administrative area after Timișoara. Towards the great regional cities it is disposed by the following distances: 490 km to Bucharest, 60 km to Timișoara, 58 km to Reșița, 45 km to Caransebeș and 101 km to Deva. From geo - morphological point of view the town belongs to the plain units, being disposed on the contact between the Lugoj Plain<sup>1</sup> (Figure 3) and the Lugoj Hills; other researchers pointed out that this town is located in the Lugoj Depression (Figure 4). Anyway, this urban settlement has continuously benefited by a very favorable position that has positively influenced the evolution and the development of this town.

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<sup>1</sup> The position of the town in the Timișului Plain is presented by the *Gazetteer of Romania*, 2008, vol. I, Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy Publishing House, Bucharest, p. 650. In this volume there are also pointed out some aspects about the mathematical and geographical position of Lugoj and Lugoj Plain.

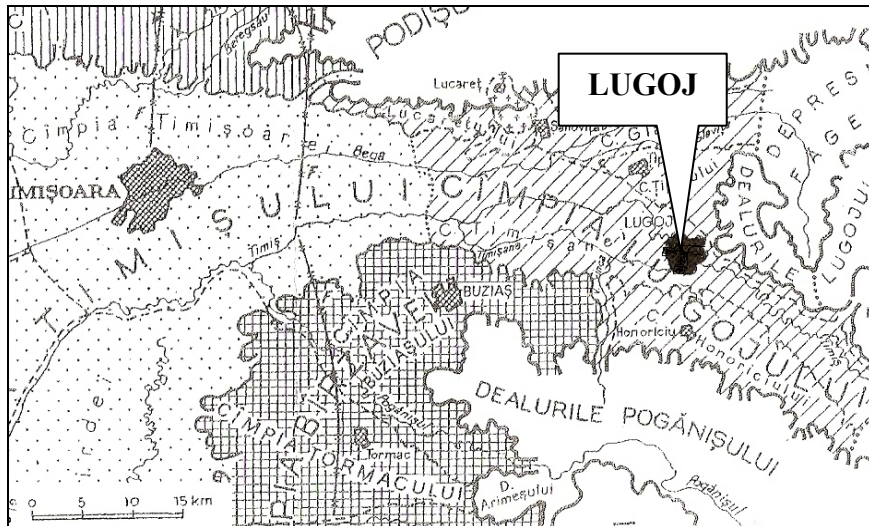


**Figure 1:** The geographical position of Lugoj in the Romanian urban system (according to Ray, Violette et al, 2006, p. 37).

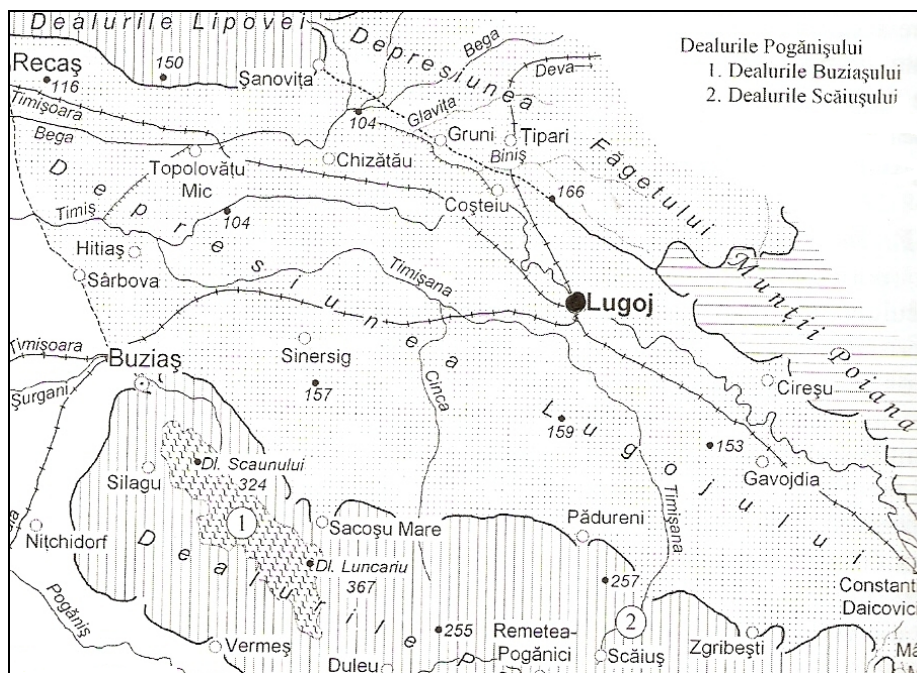


**Figure 2:** The geographical position of Lugoj in the Timiș County.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Source: [www.lugojul.ro](http://www.lugojul.ro), accessed to 25 08 2008.



**Figure 3:** The position of the municipality of Lugoj in the Timiș Plain.  
(Source: Posea, G., 1997)



**Figure 4:** The municipality of Lugoj position in the Lugoj Depression.  
(Source: Pop, G., 2005, p. 100)

At the European regional level it is situated in the DKTM Euroregion - „as the second cross-border cooperation structures (...) with Romanian association”<sup>3</sup> - and through its position in this geographical space it has created many contacts, links and relations with other cultural systems from this part of Europe. So, the historical factors imprint an intense influence in the urban life among the time. It has supported and it is still bearing German and Hungarian impact that is reflected in the landscape, in the urban structure and as well in the social and cultural features that are specific for this town. Formed by the linking of German Lugoj with Romanian Lugoj this town has an interesting history that directly influenced among the time the urban pattern and the structure of the streets.

## 2. A BRIEF HISTORICAL CHRONICLE OF THE TOWN

Lugoj is officially mentioned for the first time in a Pontifical Tax Register in 1334, but the first documentary attestation of the Lugoj District was made in 1369. In 1376 it was mentioned for the first time *The Citadel of Lugoj*. During the period between 1658 and 1718 Lugoj is under the Turkish domination and in 1699 the Turks destroyed the citadel of the town.

From 1718, Lugoj it is under Austrian administration being the capital of Lugoj - Făget District. At that time begins the colonization with German population. It hails from Austria, Moravia, Bohemia and Silesia and it will form on the left bank of Timiș River, a commune called German Lugoj.

In 1778, together with the incorporation of Banat into Hungary, Lugoj became the capital of Caraș County. An important event took place in 1795 when the Romanian Lugoj and the German part unite, forming in this way *the Cameral Trade Center of Lugoj*. In 1848 Lugoj becomes the center of the 1848 Revolution in Banat.

Later, in 1881, once with the formation of the Caraș Severin County, Lugoj became the capital of this new political and administrative unit. The town acquires the municipality status in 1889. The new Romanian political and administrative organization from 1925 divided the Caraș Severin County in two administrative territories and Lugoj becomes the capital of the Severin County. In the period between 1945 and 1989 the town supported, as all the Romanian space, the totalitarian communist domination but in 20<sup>th</sup> December 1989, once with the Revolution against the communist regime, it becomes the second free town from Romania.<sup>4</sup> The spectacular evolution of the town started up since 1944 (Voiculescu, S., 2004, p. 67). After 1990 this urban settlement is developing in the social and economical context, slowly but continuously supported the all difficulties of the economic transition but at the same time evolving positively in its development in the condition of the contemporary market economy.

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<sup>3</sup> Ilieș, Al., (2004), *România. Euroregiuni*, Editura Universității din Oradea, Oradea.

<sup>4</sup> The City Hall of the municipality of Lugoj (2006), *The Guide of the municipality of Lugoj*; The City Hall of the municipality of Lugoj (2007), *Lugoj – Vârset, Touristic Guide. Signs to the future*, S. C. Bistra S. R. L.

### 3. THE ANALYSIS OF THE STREETS NAMES AMONG THE TIME

The street names analysis is focused on the four important periods in the evolution of the urban space from Lugoj. The first one, between 1856 and 1891 it was under German and Hungarian domination and influences. The last one characterizes also the second period between 1891 and 1920. The third period from 1920 to 1989 disposes by Romanian authority and reflects obviously the communist influences in the urban space. The fourth period begins in 1989, once with the fall of the totalitarian regime, and it keeps going in present, being marked by the transition to market economy.<sup>5</sup> The number, physiognomy and the function of the streets have supported many changes in connection with the historical, political, social-economical and cultural particularities that are specific separately for every period.

#### 3.1. The period between 1856 and 1891

During this period in Lugoj it appeared 84 streets in conformity with Lugoj Commune Borough Plan stated by Lay, H., 2008 (Figure 5). The streets have been named by the people for afterward to be taken over and included in use by the authorities of that time. The official language of the names was German during the Serbian Voivodship, being inspired by the German traditional names. The plates with the streets names appear in Lugoj for the first time in 1864; they were in Romanian, German and Hungarian languages and close by the official names there were used the popular ones. An order from 1891 considered that all the names have to be inspired by the country and also the town history, so, in this time appeared many Hungarian names as:<sup>6</sup>

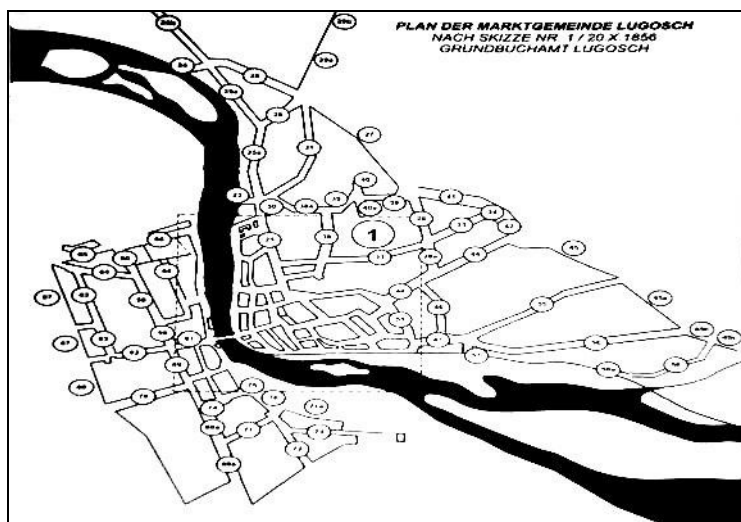
- Istvan Utca (Istvan Street);
- Maghyar Utca (Maghyar Street);
- Kyraly Utca (Kyraly Street);
- Janos Utca (Janos Street);
- Korona Utca (Crown Street).

The residences assimilated the new names but they didn't use it; they preferred in their daily life the older traditional names. The new plates that contained the names of the streets were made in Budapest and mounted in town in 1891; they were only in Hungarian fact that generated suggestions to contain also the Romanian names because the majority of the people were represented by the Romanians.

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<sup>5</sup> The periodicity and the specific and characteristics of the periods have been taken over by the work of Lay, H., (2007), *Appellations of the Lugoj streets from the oldest times to present*, Editura Brumar, Timisoara.

<sup>6</sup> The examples of the names streets presented in the four periods are selective. For more details and for a complete review on it see Lay, H., (2007), op. cit. The author makes a complete study on the streets toponomastic from Lugoj.



**Figure 5:** *The Plan of Lugoj borough in 1856 (Source: Lay, H., 2007)*

Thus, in connection with this local reality in German Lugoj there were in Hungarian and German languages while in Romanian Lugoj there lived Hungarian and Romanian. The documents at that times reflect the fact that Lugoj toponomastic was multicultural and also, multi-linguistic. The main criteria used in the name process of the streets are:<sup>7</sup>

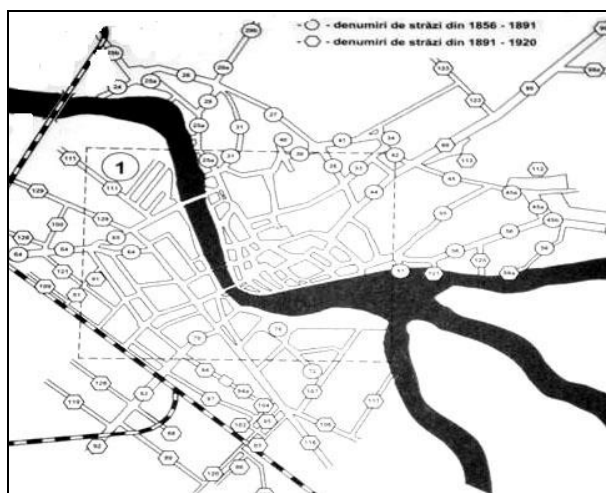
- names based on the relevant buildings with important role in the public life - *County Street, Post Street, Church Street etc;*
- names correlated by the position, direction and relations towards other streets - *Coștei Street, Recaș Street, Timiș Street, V. V. Delamarina Street, Satu Mic Street, Făget Street, Gavojdia Street, Caransebeș Street etc;* all these names are represented by towns, parishes and villages situated in the proximity of Lugoj;
- after streets position in town - *Laterally Street;*
- after dimensions of the streets - *The Small Laterally Street, The Small Laterally Street, Chasaba Long Street, The Potters Smalll Street, The Church Small Street;*
- by the professions and activities branches – *The Borough Street, The Musicians Street, The Potters Street, The Beerhouse Street, The Shepherds Street etc;*
- by the local personalities - *Josef Street, Heuffel Street;*
- by the houses and its owners - *Ioviță Street, Parivy Street;*
- by the social condition of the inhabitants - *The Princely Street, The Paupers Street;*
- by the public houses, drinking houses, pubs and bear gardens - *Casino Street, Crown Street, The Royal Street;*
- by military emplacements - *The Caserm Street, The Fortress street etc;*

<sup>7</sup> Lay, H., (2007), *op. cit.*, pp. 55-60.

- after saints and ecclesiastic emplacements - *The Greco - Unitarian Priest Street, St. John Street;*
- after the presence of rivers and water - *The Bridge Street;*
- after the fauna elements - *The Ponies Street;*
- after ethnic affiliation - *Maghyar Street;*
- after the age of the toponymes - *The New Public, The New Street Isabella;*
- names based on economic buildings - *The Stores Street.*

### 3.2. The period between 1891 and 1920

In this period in Lugoj there have appeared 64 streets with new names. It was inspired from Hungarian history, from Hungarian literature and also by local personalities. After the rename process from 1920 the names caught up by the Hungarian historical personalities have been changed by the Romanian historic ones. At that time some of the names have been changed for five times, fact that generated confusion for residences; the outcome consists in the fact that the inhabitants have been using the popular and traditional old names (Figure 6).



**Figure 6:** *The Lugoj borough Plan, respectively the Plan of the town of Lugoj with the streets between 1856 and 1920 (according to Lay, H., 2007, p. 119)*

Some examples of these streets are: Apor Utca (Apor Street), Arany Utca (Arany Street), Janos Utca (Janos Street), Ferencz Utca (Ferencz Street), Erzebet Utca (Elisabeth Street), Illona Utca (Illona Street), Maria Terezia Utca (Maria Terezia Street), Merczy Utca (Merczy Street), Petofi Utca (Petofi Street) etc. The criteria of the name process:<sup>8</sup>

- after the streets position - Timiș Street, The Exterior Street to Timiș;

<sup>8</sup> Idem pp. 61-72



- by surrounding localities - Buziaș Street, Caransebeș Street, Jabăr Street, Oloșag Street;
- by economic activities - Animals Market Street
- by personalities - Apor Street, Janos Street, Ferencz Street, Illona Street, Mercy Street, Petofi Street, Zoltan Street etc;
- by fauna elements -The Nightingale Street.

### **3. 3. The period between 1920 and 1989**

In the period between 1920 and 1989 in Lugoj there appeared about 100 streets and also roads, alleys, passes and blind alleys. Before the construction of the new districts with apartment houses and blocks of flats and to the sixties in the town appear streets only to its periphery. Once with the individualization of the new districts in the urban space the streets are named with appellations inspired by the botanic field. Together with the instauration of Romanian authorities in Banat the streets were renamed, the new names have been caught up by the politicians and also by the local personalities. In 1946 is unfurling a major process of streets rename and in the town landscape appear Russian names and appellations inspired by the Soviet Union.

After the destalinisation process in 1960 the toponymes have been newly renamed. The names were been inspired by the field of botany zoology, hydrology, by the mountains names and by historic localities. The main criteria were:<sup>9</sup>

- after important buildings - The Railway Station Street;
- after directions in town - The Stadium Street, The South Street, The Cemetery Street;
- based on the surrounding localities - Herendești Street, Oloșagului Street;
- by the streets morphology - The Small Bight Street;
- after contemporary profession and activities - Wood Street;
- after various Romanian personalities - streets as Horea, Cloșca, Crișan, V. Goldiș, L. Blaga, Traian Grozăvescu, I. D. Suci, I. Neculce, Gr. Ureche, Decebal, Matei Basarab, S. Bărnuțiu etc.
- by floristic names - The Fir Tree Street, Pines Street, Sweet Chesnut Tree Street, Sweet Cherry Tree Street, Lily Street, Flittermouse Street, Wild Rose Street, Walnut Tree Street, Nenuphar Street, Morello Street etc;
- by mountains names - Ceahlăului Street;
- after historic localities - Alba Iulia Street, Mărășesti Street, December 1th 1918 Street etc;
- after ethnic groups - Dacians Street, Gypsies Street;
- after names of rivers - Bârzava street, Nera Street, Oituz Street.

### **3. 4. The period after 1990**

After 1989 the construction activity of standardized buildings destined for people living has suspended and in this way the extension process of the districts has stopped. In 1992 and 1993 the City Hall (Figure 7) of the municipality of Lugoj delivered about 140

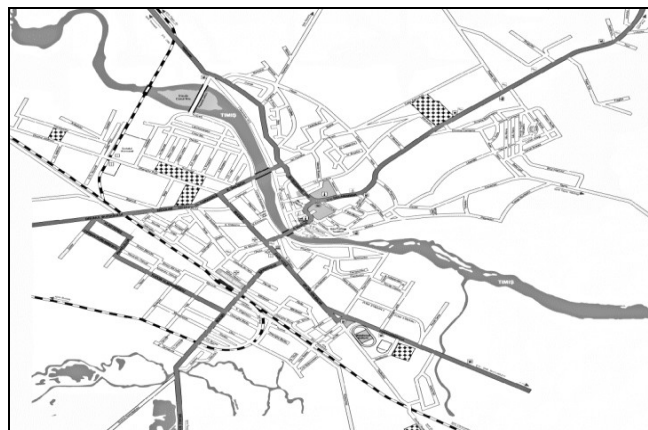
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<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, pp. 73-86.

licenses for the construction of the new houses. In the town structure it appears two new districts Wide Slope known as Eftimie Murgu and I. T. L. known as Iosif Constantin Drăgan due to the major investments made by this cultural personality in this part of the town. In the Grapevine Hills Area it was stipulating by the authorities the individualization of a new district. For the moment the houses do not dispose by number and also there are no official streets these ones succeeding to be named in the subsequently period. In the patch between 1991 and 2002 in Lugoj it started up only 14 streets as: 1 May Street, South Street, B. Bartok Street, L. Blaga Street, D. Brocea Street, G. Dobrin Street, V. Goldiș Street, J. Heuffel Street, I. Maniu Street, G. A. Petculescu Street, I. D. Suciu Street, Wide Slope Street, Stadium Area I and II. Frequently, the names were inspired by the Romanian, national or local personalities.



**Figure 7:** *The City Hall from Lugoj in 2008 (foto: Jucu, 2008)*



**Figure 8:** *The actual configuration of the streets from Lugoj.*<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Source: The City Hall of the municipality of Lugoj, (2007), *op. cit.*

The Revolution from December 1989 against the communist regime has made victims in the municipality of Lugoj. At that time in this town have died three residences from Lugoj. They were classified as heroes of revolution, this main sacrifice being followed by the fact that Lugoj have become the second free town from Romania. All three young men are in the contemporary period honorable citizens of the town and three streets have been renamed by their names: V. Rosada Street, D. Brocea Street and N. A. Pongratz. The new changes in the streets names after 1990 because of the rename process are illustrated in the table 1. The actual situation and the contemporary structure of the urban network are presented in Figure 8.

**Table 1. Changes in the streets names from Lugoj before and after 1990<sup>11</sup>**

<b>Nr. Crt</b>	<b>Name of the street before 1990</b>	<b>Name of the street after 1990</b>
1	K. Marx	A. Odeanu
2	Carpathians	Corneliu Coposu
3	Holm Oak	N. A. Pongratz
4	Gh. Frantescu	F. Barbu
5	December 30 th	A. C. Popovici
6	The Republic Place	I. C. Dragan Place
7	March 6 th	Metropolitan A. Saguna
8	Dr. Petru Groza	V. Braniste
9	V. I. Lenin	December 20 1989
10	23 August Place	The Victory Place
11	November 7 th	V. Rosada
12	G. Gheorghiu Dej	A. Mocioni
13	Semenic	Bishop Ioan Balan
14	Fr. Engels	T. Brediceanu

Source: Lay, H., 2007

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The history and the evolution of the streets names from Lugoj is complex and reflect the influences of many factors, especially historical, political and economical ones. Among the time to present in Lugoj there have appeared about 240 streets which names, frequently, have supported many renamings in function of the social - political context.

Thus, in the period between 1856 and 1920 about 130 streets have been named in connection with German and Hungarian authorities with appellation inspired from German traditional names, from German and Hungarian local or national personalities (Figure 9 and 10). The people assimilated these names but they didn't constantly use it preferring the old popular ones.

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<sup>11</sup> Source: Lay, H., 2007, *op. cit.*



**Figure 9:** A plate with a Hungarian name of a street from Lugoj  
(foto Jucu, 2008)



**Figure 10:** A plate with a German name of a street from Lugoj

Between 1920 and 1989, in Lugoj, once with the block of flats districts construction (Figures 11 and 12), it started up 100 streets. In this period, too, they supported continuously more renamings. After the Revolution from 1989 in the urban structure of the town have appeared only 10 streets. One of them was titled with the name of the one from the Revolution victims. The other two streets were renamed by the others two victims of this dramatic national event.



**Figure 11:** Communist block of flat on the I. Huniade Street



**Figure 12:** Communist architecture on The 7<sup>th</sup> November Street

(foto Jucu, 2008)

The main criteria of the streets names are various and also complex being alike with the others cities and towns from Romania. Thus, we can break away the following inspiration sources in the streets naming process: the relevant buildings from town, the

position and direction of the streets towards the other towns streets, the relationship between the town with the others streets, the dimensions of the streets, the people professions and activities branches of them, the local and national personalities, the owners of the houses and buildings, the social conditions of the inhabitants, the public houses of the town, the military emplacements, the saints and religious emplacements, the ethnic affiliation, the age of toponyms, the faunistic and floristic features,<sup>12</sup> the historical and political events as 1989 Revolution (after the names of the Revolution victims, after 1990) etc.



**Figure 13:** *An image from the new Grapewine district from Lugoj  
(foto Jucu, 2008)*



**Figure 14:** *An image from the Wide Slope District from Lugoj,  
knew in the contemporary period as Eftimie Murgu District  
(foto Jucu, 2008)*

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<sup>12</sup> Type of toponymes and criteria detailed by Crețan, R., (2000), *Toponimie geografică*, Ed. Mirton, Timișoara and Ungureanu, Al., Boamfă, I., (2006), *Toponomastică*, Ed. Sedcom Libris, Iași.

Considering the spatial evolution from the contemporary period of the new districts in Lugoj as Eftimie Murgu and Beech District in The Grapewine Hills (Figures 13 and 14)<sup>13</sup>, and viewing the continuous extension of the urban space a complete analysis will never be made, “*in stead of it the work can be bounded in time.*” (Lay, H., 2007, p. 73).

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<sup>13</sup> These districts reflect a higher degree of ruralization they're being situated on the periphery of the town, areas where individual dwellings prevailed (Jucu, 2007).