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On Slang Urbanonyms in Latvia, Lithuania and Finland

Latvian and Lithuanian toponyms used in colloquial speech and slang still are neither collected nor analysed till nowadays. This lexical layer in Finland has been carefully studied (Paunonen 2002; Ainiala 2003 etc.) /15 000 slang urbanonyms were collected, 4 100 different names among them/. The so called Finnish slang of the capital (*stadin slangi*) is wide-spread both on the level of appellatives as well as onyms. The most ancient slang urbanonyms are more than 100 years old. There are different forms of a name recorded in use, e.g.: waterfront catchment area of Helsinki *Ruoholahti* (official place name) – *Ruohis, Ruohika, Ruhika, Ruhis, Ruokkis, Ruokis, Ruokki, Rusari, Ruska, Marimaa, Pilvilahti, Ruoskuvuori, Lahti, Griinis, Gresu, Gräsä, Gräsäri, Weedland* (there are names of Finnish, Swedish and English origin). Most of the slang names are coined by the way of syncopate: *Kaisaniemi – Kaisis, Kaisa, Kaisu*; St. John's church *JohanneksenkirKKo – Jore*, or making abbreviation: *Helsingin yhteislyseo* (Lyceum of Helsinki) – *Hyltsi/Hylli*. There are a lot of metaphoric names: *Turkistarha* 'garden of sheepskincoats' (= "Stockmann"), *Juustolinna* 'palace of cheese' (= *Valio* factory).

Rather small amount of slang urbanonyms is recorded in Riga, but some of these names are rather old and used by all generations: *Lielā māja* 'Large House' (= main building of Latvian University), *Baltais nams* 'White House' (= building of National Opera). Names of the suburbs of the city Riga are widely known: *Pļavčiks* (= official name *Pļavnieki*), *Purčiks* (= *Purvciems*), *Ziepis // Ziepītis // Ziepčiks* (= *Ziepiekkalns*), *Āģis // Āģītis // Āģenītis* (= *Āģenskalns*). Only some streets of Riga have slang names (usually they are used with negative connotation): *Čakene* (= *Aleksandra Čaka iela*), *Maskačka* (= *Maskavas iela*). More popular are some reronyms – names of the largest shops and restaurants: *Rimčiks* (= supermarket "Rimi"), *Maksis* (= "Maxima"), *Stokis* (= "Stockman") /in Helsinki the same supermarket is called *Stokka, Stoga*, but *Stokkis* is used to name the street *Tukholmankatu* 'Stokholm's Street'/. Some main monuments in Riga also have their own names used in slang: *Milda* (= *Brīvības pieminekļis* 'Monument of Freedom', founded in 1935), *Kauna stabs* 'Pillory of shame' (= *Uzvaras pieminekļis* 'Monument of the Victory of Soviet Army', founded in 1945).

Very often these Latvian names are simply shortened (especially long urbanonyms): *Ziepis, Āģis, Čieris*. Many of them derived with the help of the borrowed suffixes *-ik-*, *-ņik-* or *-čik-*, rather often – with the help of Latvian typical slang suffix *-ene*: *Ķipene* (< *Ķīpsala*); diminutive suffixes *-iņš* or *-ītis*: *Lidiņš* (< *Lido*), *Vērmanītis*. Pretty often the slang names of Riga are made as metaphors: *Skapis* 'Wardrobe' (= former bar in the hotel "Rīga"), *Bigbens* 'Big Ben' (= Clock of the Central Terminal and its surroundings).

There are some well-know slang urbanonyms used in Lithuanian largest cities: *Laisvė* 'freedom' (= *Laisvės alėja* 'Lane of Freedom') in Kaunas, former *Brodas* < *Broadway*, now *Gedo prospas* (= *Gedimino prospektas*) in Vilnius, some street-names: *Krasnuha* < Russ. *Krasnyj* 'Red' (former *Raudonios Armijos prospektas* 'Avenue of the Red Army'), *Piliovkė/ Piliofkė* (= *Pilies gatvė*), suburb slang name *Koralai* 'corals' – based on the word play (= *Karoliniškės*), or simply shortened forms of the suburbs of Vilnius *Fabai* (= *Fabijoniškės*), *Pašilai* (= *Pašilaičiai*) etc Monument of the writer *Žemaitė* is known among young people as *Žemka* (derived with Slavonic suffix *-k-*).

There are many common features in coining and using of slang urbanonyms in different languages and different cultures, but each language also has its own peculiarities.