Žaneta D v o ř á k o v á (Praha)

POLNÁ – A TOPONYM THAT HAS BECOME A SYMBOL

In our minds, many toponyms are connected with important historical or mythical events. This paper is focused on the toponym Polná and some proper names related to this town. Polná was one of many small sleepy towns in the Vysočina region. Everything changed with the murder of Anežka Hrůzová in 1899. The rumours of a "ritual murder" spread and the local Jew Leopold Hilsner was charged with the crime. It was the beginning of a great anti-Semitic hysteria and Polná became the most watched place in the monarchy. The whole affair was publicized in our country and abroad. After more than 100 years the city of Polná is still associated with this murder, the Hilsner Affair and the tragic judicial error. It became a part of the common knowledge and culture of Czech people. The history is still alive and projected into the image of the town. At the scene of the act (called *U Anežky*) there is a symbolic grave which is often visited by tourists and by Czech nationalists. On the town square we can go for lunch at *U Hilsnera* Restaurant. Nearby we can find a former Jewish ghetto still unofficially called *Židák* (Žid = 'Jew') even though no Jews live here today.

Keywords
place names; toponyms; anoikonyms; Polná; Hilsner Affair; functions of proper names

At the end of the 19th century Polná was just one of many sleepy towns in the Vysočina region between Bohemia and Moravia. Apart from the castle and a few churches there were no remarkable sights to attract visitors, the period of growth had long been over, and after a large fire in 1863 and the Prussian War in 1866 the town economically declined (Šup, 1999, p. 8, 13). However, in 1899 Polná became one of the most watched places in Bohemia.

1. Murder in Polná

On Ash Wednesday, 29th March 1899, the 19-year-old woman Anežka Hrůzová from the village of Malá Věžnice (now Věžnička), about 3 km from Polná, went missing. Her body was found on Holy Saturday, 1st April, in the morning. Her throat was cut and according to "experts" there was not enough blood on the crime scene. The Christian Easter of that year fell on the Jewish holiday of Pesach (Passover) and in Polná the rumours of a "ritual murder" spread. The allegations stemmed from the belief that Jews needed the blood of Christian virgins in the production of matza on Passover.[1] About 250 Jews lived in Polná at the time when Anežka was

[1] One of the first accusations against Jews of a ritual murder occurred in 1235 in Fulda, Germany. The most famous case occurred in 1475 in Trident. In the 17th century, allegations of ritual

found dead (Kölblová, 2013, p. 40). The young Jewish man Leopold Hilsner was soon charged with the crime. The case unleashed such passions and provoked such an anti-Semitic mood in the Austro-Hungarian population that the whole case started to be called The Hilsner Affair (Hilsneriáda) because of the main actor, and it became well known throughout Europe. Politicians (especially the deputy Karel Baxa), journalists, artists and the Christian Church used the anti-Semitic wave to gain visibility. The Leopold Hilsner trial is compared with the Dreyfus Affair in France (1894–1906). Alfred Dreyfus was not accused of a ritual murder but of treason, however, the course and consequences of the process were similar.

The Hilsner Affair was the first case in our country to attract so much publicity in the media (especially in the tabloid press, anti-Semitic, and radical newspapers), and also in various pamphlets, cartoons, postcards, anonymous flyers and folk songs (Vražda Polná, 1999). The Polná process was reflected, for example, in the work of Franz Kafka and his novel *The Trial* (*Der Process*), as evidenced by his correspondence with Milena Jesenská (Černý, 1999, p. 110), and the character Pešák, a witness for the prosecution, can be found in the novel *Dancing Lessons for the Advanced in Age* (*Taneční hodiny pro starší a pokročilé*) by Bohumil Hrabal[2] (Červinka, 1999, p. 17–19). Hrabal is also the author of the text *The Murder Ballad about Anežka Hrůzová* (*Morytát o Anežce Hrůzové*).

The awareness of the Hilsner Affair is a part of our "general cultural encyclopaedia". Czech children learn about it at school in connection with the appearance of the future president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk who rejected the ritual murder as a medieval superstition[3] and used to be called the Czech Zola because of his defence of Hilsner. The affair is still commemorated by exhibitions,[4] popularizing articles, lectures, TV documentaries[5] and movies.[6]

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murder spread particularly in Eastern Europe (Vražda v Polné, 1999). At the end of the 19th century, several cases were investigated as an alleged ritual murder, for example Ester Solymosi's death in Hungary in 1883 (see J. Szántó, 1999, p. 105–107; Michal Frankl, 1999, p. 152–159). The murder in Polná was one of the last cases when this allegation against Jews emerged in Europe (Kölblová, 2013, p. 40).

2 But only in the first edition. The son of Petr Pešák complained to Hrabal because, in his opinion, Hrabal had disrespected his father's memory. Therefore B. Hrabal left out this passage in the following editions of this book (Červinka, 1999, p. 17–19). Pešák for example swore under oath that he had recognized Hilsner from the distance of about 600 m (!), which is impossible, but the court believed him.

3 See T. G. Masaryk: *Nutnost revidovati proces Polenský* (Praha 1899), T. G. Masaryk: *Význam procesu polenského pro pověru rituelní* (Praha 1900).

4 E.g. The Jewish Museum in Prague organized an exhibition in 1999 to mark the 100th anniversary of The Hilsner Affair titled "Murder in Polná", and in the Regional Jewish Museum in Polná there is a permanent exhibition about the Hilsner Affair.

5 For example, *The Death of Anežka Hrůzová* (*Smrt Anežky Hrůzové*, Czechoslovakia, 1992, directed by M. Růžička) based on the book by J. Kovtun *Tajuplná vražda* (Praha 1994) or the

Polná has been embedded in our historical memory as a place of murder, superstition and intolerance. Many toponyms in our mind are automatically associated with important historical or mythical events that should have taken place there. This is a secondary association[7] unrelated to the name itself[8] – for example, in the Czech context the hill *Říp* evokes the idea of the forefather Čech,[9] *Bílá hora* (White Mountain) means defeat,[10] *Terezín* is a ghetto,[11] and *Polná* (if people connect it with any meaning at all) is a place of a murder.[12] It also follows from a survey conducted recently. The survey was focusing on people's awareness of this place. The respondents were asked to answer the question: "What do you think of first when you hear the name *Polná*?"[13] For most of the 73 respondents the keywords[14]

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two-part *Case of Leopold Hilsner* (*Případ Leopolda Hilsnera*, Czech Republic 1999, directed by P. Burian) based on the book by B. Černý *Justiční omyl* (Praha 1990).

6 A great interest in the Hilsner Affair has recently been raised by the two-part film *Crime in Polná* (*Zločin v Polné*, Czech Republic, 2016, directed by V. Polesný) which primarly attempted to reconstruct the process and focused on the character of the lawyer Zdeněk Auředníček and the role of the professor Masaryk in the whole case.

7 See Rudněv – Suprun, 1989.

8 For names with historical semantics see David, 2011, p. 15–23.

9 Forefather Čech is a mythical leader who brought the Czechs to Bohemia. Říp is a mountain where he stayed when he had decided that this place would be the best for his people.

10 The Bohemian army was defeated in the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. Its aftermath drastically changed the religious landscape of the Czech lands for the following 300 years because of recatholicization, and decline of the Czechspeaking aristocracy and the elite, as well as the Czech language.

11 Terezín was built as a military fortress in 1782. During WWII the Nazis established a Jewish ghetto in Terezín (Theresienstadt), a transfer station before continuing to the death camps in the East.

12 There are many anoikonyms connected with murders, crimes, executions etc. They are reflected in local tales, onomastic legends or folk songs. In this field of study, onomastics is very close to folklore.

13 It was just an experimental probe which I carried out on 16th November 2017 on a Facebook forum. Among voluntary respondents there were 42 females and 31 males. I have no information about their age, education level, place of origin, etc. They were asked just one question.

14 Those who had visited the town also gave places and monuments (square, nice church, chateau, clock museum, synagogue, dairy, power station and spa, brewery, silver mines, "a town 15 km from my place", nature trails and Anežka's grave). Others remembered public events here (rock concerts 20 years ago, The Carrot Festival), or purely personal events (there is a client / friend / relative, "my great-great-great-grandmother came from here", "I was here on my first Scout trek"). Two respondents associated *Polná* with another historical figure, namely Božena Němcová, who stayed here and has a memorial plaque at the house in *Polná*, and Bohumil Hrabal, who worked here in the brewery. For another respondent *Polná* was primarily *Polná* in the Šumava Mountains, because her sister lived here, not *Polná* in the Vysočina region, and another mentioned Slovakia, because there are also several toponyms *Poľná*. Three people said they imagined a "town in the fields" (*pole* = 'field'). A single respondent wrote that the name *Polná* did not mean anything to him, and another admitted: "I remember that something happened there that was much talked about, which I should know if only I weren't so forgetful."

Anežka Hrůzová, The Hilsner Affair, murder, crime, Jews, anti-Semitism, and Masaryk appeared. One respondent remembered that "there was a song 'Because they killed our pretty young girl in Polná'". The locals respond to the connection between Polná and the murder with irritation. It bothers them that their town is only associated with this event, they know the role played by Polná residents who were willing to testify and lie in court, undoubtedly they know that "already on the day when Hilsner was arrested, several hundred youngsters and adults went to the Jewish quarter. Stones were flying into windows and police officers were quickly called from Německý Brod." (Černý, 1999, p. 22)

2. Proper names

Let us have a look at how this murder was reflected in the surrounding countryside and the city itself. We will follow in the footsteps of the crime.

A very interesting source of information about historical realms for us is a set of historical postcards related to these events. We can see the participants of the whole tragedy, and places associated with their lives and the murder. The photographs and drawings published as postcards were supplemented with very detailed descriptions such as: "The fateful path where Anežka Hrůzová from Malá Věžnička near Polná, murdered on 29th March 1899, walked for the last time", or "The hunting ground owner A. Dvořák from Polná meets the mayor of Malá Věžnička in search of a trace of blood of Anežka Hrůzová, murdered on 29th March 1899", or "The native house of Anežka Hrůzová in Malá Věžnice near Polná, murdered on 29th March 1899. Anežka Hrůzová's mother tells Mr. Ant. Dvořák from Polná about the murder of her daughter."[15] Not only the birthplace of the murdered (Malá Věžnička near Polná) but also the anoikonym *Březina* are repeated.

2.1 *Březina*

The anoikonym *Březina*, according to the *Dictionary of Anoikonyms in Bohemia* (Slovník pomístních jmen v Čechách, 2009, p. 137–139), is in our territory quite common as there are about 1,181 such places.[16] Using this particular name in newspapers, and also in folk songs, did not only help to determine the exact location of the act but also, by referring to a particular place, it increased the credibility of

[15] A collection of postcards is available [online] <http://www.kzhp.cz/galerie/pripad-leopolda-hilsnera>, cit. 2018-02-02. See also Prchal, 1999, p. 130–162.

[16] In Moravia there are places called *Březina* as well, unfortunately, we do not know the exact amount, because this part of the *Dictionary of Anoikonyms in Moravia* (Slovník pomístních jmen na Moravě) has not been finished yet (see <https://spjms.ujc.cas.cz/alphabet/B>, cit. 2018-04-12).

the story about the ritual murder. At the same time, however, because it is such a common place name, it was a bit of a suggestion that something like that could happen in any other *Březina*, an idea which was very important in anti-Semitic propaganda.

The maiden's body pure and fair
murdered tragically in evening's air
the young bushes in Březina woods
were crying deeply out of their roots.[17]

As the anoikonym suggests, predominantly birches were growing there (*bříza* = ‚birch'). "The forest Březina, on whose edge Anežka Hrůzová was found, stretches about 3 kilometers south of Polná towards Věžnička. To the west it is lined by the stream Jamenský potok, which flows into the pond called Peklo, to the east there is the fateful road from Věžnička to Polná. (…) On both sides of the driveway between Věžnice and Polná there were footpaths in 1899. The path near the forest was grassy and less muddy than the footpath in the fields sloping to the stream Dobroutovský potok.[18] Anežka walked past the forest." (Kovtun, 1994, p. 13)

The name of *Březina* is still used today and we can find it on current tourist maps.

2.2 *U Anežky*

The locals started calling the place where the murdered body was found *U Anežky* (By Anežka). It is surrounded by stones and a wooden cross is overlooking them. There is a memorial sign hanging on the tree under a holy picture. Anežka became something like a local saint and the place of her death became a place of worship (Černý, 1999, p. 24). After 1938, national pilgrimages were held here (Černý, 1999, p. 112). Today it is one of the stops of the newly marked educational trail of Klement (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for U Anežky). It is still frequented and maintained, and so is Anežka's grave in the Polná cemetery. Even today, after more than a hundred years, the place *U Anežky* has been misused as a meeting site for extreme right-wing radicals and their anti-Semitic

[17] Translated by E. Feiglová. In the Czech original: „To tělo dívky ušlechtilé, / jež krutě bylo zavražděné / za večerní té smutné chvíle / v tom mlází zvaném Březině." (Černý, 1999, p. 42)

[18] "The road from Polná to Věžnička only touches the forest in one place and nowhere else, and the people of Věžnice walk a few steps next to the thickets in the spring and autumn, when the other side of the embankment is muddy," wrote the local priest Ferdinand Vlček in his argument against T. G. Masaryk who did not visit the site before writing his booklet *Nutnost revidovati proces Polenský*, and he thought, for example, that the forest Březina was well visible and perhaps within hearing distance from Polná (Černý, 1999, p. 65, 69).

Figure 1: *U Anežky*

Figure 2: *Anežčin most*

manifestations.[19] Some of them believe the myth of the ritual murder even today and are spreading it.[20]

2.3 *Anežčin most*

On the present map we find also another place connected with Anežka Hrůzová – a bridge over the stream Zhořský potok on the road connecting Polná and Věžnička, built in 1902 by cooperation of the town Polná and the village Věžnička. In memory of the murdered Anežka Hrůzová, it was named *Anežčin most* (Anežka's Bridge) (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Anežčin most). At that time the events were still fresh, only three years had passed since the girl's death. In contrast to the name *U Anežky*, which originated spontaneously, *Anežčin most* was given the name in order to celebrate the local "saints" and thus it is a commemorative toponym with an honorific and ideological function.

2.4 *Panský les*, or *Mršník* (*U Boru*)

Anežka was not the only one. In the summer of 1898, a young 23-year-old maid from Horní Věžnice, Marie Klímová, went missing. On 27th October 1898,

[19] The chairman of the National Democracy Party, Adam B. Bartoš, received a sentence of one year probation period in October 2016 for a text he had attached to the official information board in Polná at the place where Anežka Hrůzová was found, stating: "Her death brought the Czech nation together and urgently showed the necessity of solving the Jewish question. The Jewish question has not yet been satisfactorily resolved." (Echo24, see Doležal, 2015).

[20] See e. g. <https://poslusnost.wordpress.com/2008/04/01/vzpominka-na-anezku-hruzovou>, <https://hruzovaanezka.wordpress.com>, etc.

a skeleton of a woman was found in the forest near Polná and it was declared to be her remains (Černý, 1999, p. 73). Leopold Hilsner was accused of her murder too, during the second trial in Písek (25 October – 14 November 1900).

On historical postcards, the place where she was found is marked as *Panský les*, which is the name of the forest located on the left side of the Kukle pond, with an area of 44 hectares (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Panský les). In other sources, however, the forest *Mršník* north of Polná is mentioned. The anoikonym *Panský les* refers to the owner, *panský* means that the forest belonged to the local nobility. The name *Mršník* originates form the noun *mršník*, i.e. ‚marsh pit', a place where bodies of dead animals lie. However, the anoikonym *Mršník* was not motivated by the discovery of the dead Marie, it is a much older name used since the Middle Ages for the forest *U Boru*, which is located near the smaller pond Bor, south of the *Panský les* and closer to Polná (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Mršník). The exact location of Marie's body was a few steps away from the path from Zhoř (where she was supposed to go to a funfair) or Záborná (where her boyfriend Čumpl lived) (Černý, 1999, p. 73).

The place where the remains of Marie Klímová were found was marked with a simple wooden cross, but unlike the place where Anežka Hrůzová was found, it did not become a place of a cult, nor was it named. Marie was always overshadowed by Anežka, perhaps because the ritual motive of her death was not mentioned during the second trial of Hilsner, although it was quietly presumed. For the entire case of Polná, using the singular form is typical to this day – even though Leopold Hilsner was finally charged with two murders,[21] it is still referred to as "the murder in Polná", "the crime in Polná", etc., not murders or crimes.

2.5 *Židovské město*

A part of the town Polná, which includes *Karlovo náměstí* and the surrounding area (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Židovské město; also Rérych, 1927, p. 34–36), is called *Židovské město* (The Jewish Town). The agreement on found-

[21] Let us add for the sake of completeness that rumors about "a third ritual murder" spread in 1922 when a naked corpse of Marie Pytlíková was allegedly found in the forest called *Cíp* at Filipské Chaloupky near Polná (see David, 2006). Previously, the anti-Semitic papers attempted to revive the ritual superstition, for example in 1920 in the magazine *Štít národa* there appeared an article about a dead girl in Kostelec nad Orlicí dating back to 1915 (according to the medical discovery the death was caused by a fall into a quarry), etc. (Černý, 1999, p. 111). The report about Marie Pytlíková was published again by the anti-Semitic paper *Vlajka* on 2nd December 1939 (<http://www.holocaust.cz/sources/documents/anti-Semitism/anti-Semitism-propaganda-in-protectorate-guild-a-morava/clanky-z-dobove-print/treti-ritualni-vrazda-u-polne>). Incidentally, the leader of *Vlajka* Jan Rys was the author of the extensive demagogic book *Hilsneriáda a TGM* published in 1939 (Červinka, 1999).

ing of a Jewish quarter behind the Horní brána was concluded in 1681 between the Jewish community, the county office and the city council. As it has been mentioned here, about 250 Jews lived in Polná at the time when Anežka was found dead. Today no one lives here.[22]

Today's Karlovo náměstí was formerly called *Židovské náměstí* (The Jewish Square), unofficially *Židák*.[23] The city council changed the name at the meeting on 30th July 1897.[24] The old place name *Židák* is still alive in Polná and used by the locals.[25]

Next to Karlovo náměstí we can find *Rabínský plácek* (Rabbinic Square) (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Rabínský plácek). In the former *Rabínský dům* (Rabbinic House), there is the Regional Jewish Museum housing the permanent exhibitions "The Jews in Polná" and "The Hilsner Affair". The museum also organizes a guided sightseeing tour to the symbolic grave of Anežka Hrůzová in the Březina forest (!). Next to the Museum we can see the old synagogue. Leopold Hilsner and his mother inhabited house No. 532 situated opposite the synagogue, where there used to be a Jewish school and later the almshouse.[26]

The last place to commemorate the former Jewish settlement of Polná is *Židovský hřbitov* (The Jewish cemetery). It is 700 meters to the northwest of Husovo náměstí behind the street Pod Kalvárií. The oldest tombstones date back to the end of the 17th century (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Židovský hřbitov). But Hilsner's grave is not here, he is buried in Vienna, where he died on 9th January 1928.

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22 Only 3 out of a total of 63 Jews from Polná survived Nazi genocide and none of them returned there after the war (Prchal, 2007, p. 2–5).

23 The square was founded in 1681 as a result of a lawsuit filed by the Polná Jews. In their opinion they were relegated to an unsuitable place for business under Kalvárie. "The preserved baroque area of the ghetto from 1680 to 1682 has two parts – the original city, a triangular plan, and the lower square, the so-called Rabínský plácek. Several houses that formed it were completed in the original ghetto during the expansion in 1740. At the northern peak there was the main entrance gate; the plan of the rectangular Rabínský plácek was closed by the lower gate situated originally between the wine cellar and the residential house No. 535. In the complete ghetto there were 32 mostly duplex houses rebuilt in a modern style, the synagogue and the Rabbi's house." (Polenská encyklopedie, the entry for Karlovo náměstí)

24 It was a part of a great renaming event in Polná, many urban names were changed for commemorative names with ideological function. They were meant to honour important persons of Czech history (*Hlavní náměstí → Husovo náměstí*, *Horní předměstí → Palackého třída*, *Růžová ulice → Poděbradova ulice* etc.).

25 Šup (1999, p. 11) uses the form *Na židáku*.

26 There is no sign or any commemorative plaque on this house. However, since March 2002 there has been a plaque on the house in Vienna where he lived at the end of his life. There it is a text in Hebrew, German and Czech: "At this place there was a house where Leopold Hilsner (1876–1928) lived before his death. As an innocent victim of a lie about a ritual murder he suffered 19 years in jail." („Na tomto místě stál dům, kde žil před svou smrtí Leopold Hilsner (1876–1928). Jako nevinná oběť lži o rituální vraždě živořil 19 let v žaláři.")

Figure 3: Anežka's grave

Figure 4: Pizzeria *U Hilsnera*

2.6 *U Hilsnera*

Near the Karlovo náměstí you can find the pizzeria *U Hilsnera* (At Hilsner's). Hilsner's surname (written in Roman and also in Hebrew script אצל הלסנר) is used (or misused?) purely for advertising purposes to attract attention of tourists. The offered menu has nothing to do with Jewish or local Polná cuisine and we will not find there any "Anežka's bloody steak" or any other allusions or references to the affair.

Leopold Hilsner is probably the best known inhabitant of Polná although "he was not even from Polná at all and he belonged to Velké Meziříčí", as B. Rérych (1935, p. 3) emphasized. He was not very intelligent, he was poor and unemployed, he was said to be a troublemaker. That is why he was an easy target. The detectives made a lot of mistakes during the investigation. They focused on the ritual motive and Hilsner so much that they ignored the other possible ways of investigation and evidence that did not fit in the prepared story. (For example, there were speculations that Anežka was killed by her brother because of money.) The court in Kutná Hora convicted Hilsner on 16th September 1899 of the murder of Anežka Hrůzová and sentenced him to death. He appealed but during the new trial in Plzeň the accusation of the murder of Marie Klímová was added and he was sentenced again on 14th November 1900. The verdict was changed by an imperial pardon on 11th June 1901 to a life sentence, but many requests for revision of the

trial were rejected. Not long before the end of World War I (24th March 1918), Hilsner was pardoned by the emperor Karel I and released. He lived in Velké Meziříčí, Prague and Vienna, where he also died at the age of 51. He never returned to Polná.

3. Conclusion

In Polná and its surroundings we can find old place names and urban names that had been here long before the crime.[27] They speak about the local Jewish community (*Židovské město*, unofficial name for Karlovo náměstí *Židák*, *Rabínský plácek*, *Židovský hřbitov*, etc.). The old toponym *Březina* became famous because of the discovery of Anežka's dead body. In particular, the anoikonym *Březina* was mentioned in the press so often that, as Břetislav Rérych wrote at the beginning of his book *Rodáci a obyvatelé města Polné* (1935, p. 3): "There were times when even the King of England knew the way to Březina and where Malá Věžnice was."

The place where Anežka was found in the forest of Březina became a place of commemoration, and a new name *U Anežky* was given to it. It is still visited, there is an educational trail here and it is possible to go on a guided tour organized by the Regional Jewish Museum. It is not only a destination of tourists but also of neo-Nazis. On the other hand, the place where Marie was found has been completely forgotten, and today there is even disagreement about the exact position (whether in *Panský les* or in the forest *Mršník* /today called *U Boru*/).

We can also see the name Anežka in the commemorative (honorific) name of *Anežčin most* from 1902. The name of Leopold Hilsner is used in the name of the restaurant *U Hilsnera*. However, in the case of this newest chrematonym the name does not have an ideological function but it only uses our general cultural encyklopedia commercially.

The toponym of Polná has become a symbol. Even more than a hundred years after those sad events, we still connect Polná with them. It is a reminder of how easy it is to manipulate public opinion, show a scapegoat and commit a judicial error. The real perpetrator(s) has never been found but Leopold Hilsner has never been officially rehabilitated. The enormous wave of anti-Semitism that flooded the entire monarchy of that time is perceived even more tragically due to its being a precursor to later events that resulted in the Holocaust. And it all started in the Březina forest, in a small town that did not differ from others…

[27] Unfortunately, we do not have a list of names from Polná as from other municipalities where the collecting of place names took place in 1963–1980. Many of them, however, are written in the *Polenská encyklopedie* available on the Polná website.

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POLNÁ – TOPONYMUM, KTERÉ SE STALO SYMBOLEM

Mnoho toponym si v mysli spojujeme s důležitými historickými nebo mytologickými událostmi. Tento příspěvek je zaměřen na toponymum Polná a některá pomístní jména spjatá s tímto městem. Polná byla malé, ospalé městečko na Vysočině. Vše se změnilo vraždou Anežky Hrůzové v roce 1899. Začaly se šířit spekulace o „rituální vraždě" a ze zločinu byl obviněn místní židovský mladík Leopold Hilsner. Tak začala veliká antisemitská hysterie a Polná se stala jedním z nejsledovanějších míst tehdejší monarchie. Celá aféra byla medializována u nás i v cizině. Po více než 100 letech je město Polná stále asociováno s touto vraždou, Hilsnerem a tragickým justičním omylem. Stala se součástí české všeobecné encyklopedie a kultury. Historie je stále živá a projektuje se do „image" města. Místo činu (zvané *U Anežky*), kde je symbolický hrob, je často navštěvováno turisty i českými nacionalisty. Na náměstí si můžeme zajít na oběd do restaurace *U Hilsnera*. A nedaleko leží bývalé židovské ghetto, stále neoficiálně nazývané *Židák*, i když tu dnes žádní židé nežijí.

Klíčová slova

místní jména; pomístní jména; toponyma; Polná; Hilsneriáda; funkce vlastních jmen

Žaneta Dvořáková
z.dvorakova@ujc.cas.cz
Czech Language Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences
Department of Onomastics
Valentinská 1
116 46 Praha 1
CZECH REPUBLIC