



A STUDY ON SOURCES OF NAMES OF CAPITALS

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ПРОУЧВАНЕ НА ПРОИЗХОДА НА ИМЕНАТА НА СТОЛИЦИТЕ

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ABSTRACT: Sources of place names are among the research topics in the science of geography. Current research is compiled from various resources related to the sources of the capital in independent countries. results show that; out of 196 capitals in independent countries, names of 101 was based on geographical characteristics, 31 was based on individuals, 5 on communities, 4 on conquests, 3 on mythology and another 3 on legends. Name source of the 14 capitals is not exactly known and the names of the rest of the capitals, 35 in number, were based on several other elements. The most common element in identifying the names of capitals is found to be the natural and human geography elements of the location of the city and its immediate vicinity. Statesmen, explorers and colonists were influential in determining the names of new capitals discovered through explorations or founded after explorations. Compilation of name sources of country capitals has allowed us to obtain valuable information regarding the geographical characteristics and historical processes of these settlements.

Key words: World Regional Geography, Capital, Place Names, Geography

Introduction

Names of settlements have crucial importance in identifying and presenting the geographical, historical and other characteristics of a region (Güner et.al., 2000:283). Sources of place names are among the research topics in the science of geography because place names are important sources that can provide information about the geographical features of an area (Alagöz, 1984). Geographical attributes have been taken into consideration throughout the world while naming the countries (Güner, 2001), cities and rural settlements. Another interesting topic in terms of place names is the investigation into the sources of the names of capitals. Capitals are generally the most important settlement locations of countries. The most important cultural, political and economic centers are the capitals in most of the countries.

In the current investigation, meanings of names of capitals were compiled with the help of several works (Room, 2006; Everett-Heath, 2000; Güner, 2001). Sources of the names of 182 capitals in 196 independent countries were tabulated (Table 1). It was identified that the majority of the capital names (66%) was based on geographical characteristics, individuals, communities, conquests, mythology and legends. Out of 196 capitals in independent countries, names of

101 was based on geographical characteristics, 31 was based on individuals, 5 on communities, 4 on conquests, 3 on mythology and another 3 on legends. Name source of the 14 capitals is not exactly known and the names of the rest of the capitals, 35 in number, were based on several other elements.

Natural and human geographical attributes of the area of its immediate vicinity were taken into consideration while naming 101 of the capitals. Statesmen (king, president, tribal chief), explorers and colonist were influential in determining the names of new capitals discovered through explorations or founded after explorations. Names of 12 capitals (Andorra la Vella, Monaco, Guatemala City, Algiers, Panama City, Vatican City, Sao Tome, Luxembourg, San Marino, Mexico City, Brasilia, Tunis) are the same as the name of the country.

1. Sources of the Names of Capitals

The sources of many of the capital names are based on geographical characteristics, individuals, communities, conquests, mythology and legends (Table 1).

2.1. Capitals whose names are based on geographical attributes

2.1.1. Capitals whose names are based on physical geography characteristics

The sources of 64 capital names are based on physical geography characteristics (hydrograph-

ic, topographic, bio-geographic, geological, climatologic, location).

Table 1: Sources of The Names of Capitals

Source of the Name		Name of the Capital	Nr	
GEOGRAPHY	Physical Conditions	Hydrographic	Moscow, Kabul, Ottawa, Vienna, Vilnius, Lilongwe, Hanoi, Kuala Lumpur, Paramaribo, Berlin, Brussels, Bern, Nairobi, Amsterdam, Conakry, Helsinki, Beirut, Kishinev, Dublin, Riyadh	20
		Topographical	Podgorica, Monaco, Phnom Penh, Monte Video, Muscat, Tel Aviv, Bangui, Moroni, Guatemala City, Tehran, Pyongyang, Basse-Terre, Algiers, Stockholm, Oslo, Praia, Riga	17
		Bio-geographical	Doha, Vientiane, Dakar, Colombo, Bangkok, Asmara, Prague, Andorra La Vella, Manila, Mbabane, Panama City, Kampala	12
		Geological	Tashkent, Maseru, Timphu, Reykjavik, Tbilisi, Tegucigalpa	6
		Climatologic	Baku, Honiara, Windhoek, Buenos Aires, N'djamena	5
		Location	New Delhi, Zagreb, Vaduz, T'ai-pei	4
	Human Conditions	Religious	Islamabad, Mogadishu, Vatican City, San Salvador, Saint John's, Saint Georges, San Jose, Santiago, Asuncion, Santo Domingo, Sao Tome, Sofia, Lima, Baghdad, Managua	15
		Historical Structures	Tallinn, Bishkek, Luxembourg, Belgrade, Ankara, Kathmandu, Sarajevo, Rabat, Bridgetown	9
		Port Characteristics	Port of Spain, Port-Vila, Havana, Porto-Novo, Bandar Seri Begawan, Copenhagen, Port-au-Prince	7
		Political Geography	Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul, Astana, Libreville, Freetown	6
	Individuals		Washington, Gaborone, London, Malabo, Yerevan, Yamoussoukro, Georgetown, Pretoria, Kingston, Brazzaville, Monrovia, Budapest, Bamako, Valetta, Port Louis, Ulan Bator, Nouakshott, Maputo, Abuja, Port Moresby, Bucharest, Castries, Kingtown, San Marino, Victoria, Bratislava, Funafuti, Kiev, Amman, Lusaka, Harare	31
	Communities		Quito, Accra, Bissau, Yaounde, Caracas	5
	Conquests		Tirana, Nassau, Bogota, Wellington	4
	Mythology		Dhaka, Tunis, Athens	3
Legends		Rome, Mexico City, Cairo	3	
Other Elements		Abu Dhabi, Yangon, Dar es Salaam, La Paz, Canberra, Manama, Minsk, Belmopan, Brasilia, Ouagadougou, Djibouti, Jakarta, Addis Ababa, Paris, Banjul, Levkosia, Pristina, Kuwait, Tripoli, Antananarivo, Male, Niamey, Warsaw, Lisbon, Kigali, Singapore, Ljubljana, Khartoum, Damascus, Dushanbe, Lome, Nuku'alofa, Ashkhabad, Luanda, Madrid	35	
Source Unknown		Kinshasa, Bairiki, Skopje, Sana, Bujumbura, Roseau, Suva, Juba, Majuro, Palikir, Yaren, Melekeok, Apia, Dili	14	

Names of Capitals Based on Hydrographic Attributes

Russian capital **Moscow** is named after the river that crosses the city and as a word Moscow means river (Room, 2006:256). Afghan capital **Kabul** is named after the river Kabul that flows in the city (Everett-Heath, 2000). **Ottawa** settlement, the capital of Canada, was named after the river which means "big river" which crosses the city (Room, 2006:283). The meaning of the word **Vienna**, the capital of Austria, comes from "vin-do" (white) and "bona" (fort) in the Celtic lan-

guage. The meaning of Vienna is "the White Fort". "White Fort" represents the water of little Vienna (Wien) that flows into the Danube river in the city (Room, 2006:395). Lithuanian capital, **Vilnius**, was named after the Wilnya River that crosses the city. The word "vilnis" means "wave" in Lithuanian (Everett-Heath, 2000). Capital of Malawi, **Lilongwe** was named after the river that flows through the city and the meaning of the word is probably water or river (Room, 2006:219). The meaning of the word **Hanoi**, the capital of Vietnam is "inside the riv-

er” (Room, 2006:159). Meaning of **Kuala Lumpur**, Malaysian capital is “muddy confluence” (Room, 2006:204). The word **Paramaribo**, the capital of Suriname comes from the word “para” which means water and “maribo” which means the inhabitants in Guarani language (Room, 2006:287).

The name of German capital **Berlin** comes from the word “berl” which meant “swamp” in Polabian, an old Slavic language (Room, 2006:56). **Brussels**, the capital of Belgium, was named after German origin word “broca sali” that meant “swamp area” (Room, 2006:70). The origin of the word **Bern**, the capital of Switzerland, is the word “ber” with Indoeuropean roots that meant “marshy place” (Room, 2006:57). Kenya’s capital **Nairobi** means “swamp” in Swahili (Room, 2006:260).

The capital of Holland, **Amsterdam**, was named after the Amstel Dam founded on Amstel River (Room, 2006:29) which crosses the city. The name of the river in old Holland “aeme stelle” meant “the area abounding with water”. **Conakry**, the capital of Guinea is located in a peninsula. The name was derived from the African word “konakri” which means “over the water” (Room, 2006:95)

Helsinki, the capital of Finland, was founded in 1550 by the Swedish King Gustav Vasa who named the city Helsingfors. “Helsing” means the name of the local public in Old Norwegian and “fors” means waterfall. The city was named after a close by waterfall located in the estuary of Vantaa River (Room, 2006:163).

The meaning of **Beirut**, capital of Lebanon is “wells” in Hebrew. The word “well” which means “be’er” is singular whereas the plural word is “beerot”. (Room, 2006:52). Moldavian capital **Kishinev** was derived from the word “kishineu” which meant “artesian well” or “spring” in old Moldovan (Room, 2006:198).

The name of the Irish capital **Dublin** comes from “dubhlinn” which means “black pool” in the Irish language (Room, 2006:114).

The name of **Riyadh**, the capital of Saudi Arabia, comes from “ar-riyad” which means “The Gardens” in Arabic. Since the city was founded in a small oasis, it was named this way (Room, 2006:318).

Names of Capitals Based on Topographic Attributes

As a word, **Podgorica**, capital of Montenegro means “under the mountain”. The city is named this way since it is located inside a depression

surrounded by three mountains (Room, 2006:297-298). The name of **Monaco** is derived from the word “monu” which means mountain in Basque (Room, 2006:252). The meaning of the word **Phnom Penh**, the capital of Cambodia is “mountain of plenty” (Room, 2006:294-295). **Montevideo**, capital of Uruguay was derived from words “monte” and “video” (mountain and I see in Spanish). When Portuguese explorer Magellan saw the nice scenery there, he used the expression “monte vidieo” (I saw the mountains) (Room, 2006:254). The capital of Oman, **Muscat** means “hidden” in Arabic. Since the country is isolated from the interior of the country by a range of hills, the name was seen as fitting (Room, 2006:258). **Tel Aviv**, the capital of Israel, means “spring hill” (Room, 2006:371). The capital of the Republic of Central Africa, **Bangui** is situated in the upper segments of the first large escarpment by River Ubangi and the city is named after the word “bobangui” which means steep and rapid (Room, 2006:47).

The name of **Moroni**, the capital of Comor Islands was derived from the words “moro” and “ni” which means “fire” and “place” respectively and means “at the place of fire” (Web-1). This name was selected due to the existence of active volcanoes close to the city. The name of **Guatemala City**, the capital of Guatemala was derived from the Native American word “uhatzmlha” which means “mountain where water gushes” (Room, 2006:153). The mountain in question is the Agua Volcano located by Guatemala.

The name of **Tehran**, capital of Iran means “flat, low”. Some experts state that the word “Tehran” meant “warm place” in Old Persian (Room, 2006:371). **Pyongyang**, the capital of Northern Korea was derived from “pyong” and “yang” which mean “flat” and “land” respectively in Korean. The word describes the terrain in the area (Room, 2006:307). The name **Basse-Terre**, capital of Saint Kitts and Nevis, has French origin and means “lowland” (Web-2).

The meaning of **Algiers**, the capital of Algeria is “islands” in Arabic. The name was selected due to the existence of two islands located in the entrance to the city port (Güner, 2001:28). The name of Stockholm, capital of Sweden, means “island in the bay” (Room, 2006:359).

The name of **Oslo**, capital of Norway was derived from the words “os” which means “estuary and river mouth” in the north of Oslo Fjord in old Norwegian and “lo” which was the name of the river where the old city was founded in the past (Room, 2006:282).

Praia, the capital of Cape Verde means “beach” or “shore” in Portuguese (Everett-Heath, 2000).

The capital of Latvia, **Riga**, was named after the curves and bends formed by Western Dvina River that crosses the city. It was derived from the old Lithuanian word “ringa” which meant “bend” (Room, 2006:316).

Names of Capitals Based on Bio-geographical Attributes

The name of **Doha**, the capital of Qatar was derived from the Arabic word “ad-dawha” which means “big tree”. The capital was named after the prominent tree located in the original fishing town on the eastern shores of Qatar Peninsula (Room, 2006:112). The name of the capital city of Laos, **Vientiane**, means sandalwood town. The name was derived from the words “vieng” and “chan” which means “town” and “sandalwood” respectively in Laotian (Room, 2006:395). Capital of Senegal, **Dakar**, was derived from the word “n’dakar” which means tamarind tree (Room, 2006:103). Capital of Sri Lanka, **Colombo**, was named after mango trees and the word Colombo means “mango leaves” (Room, 2006:94). The meaning of **Bangkok**, the capital of Thailand is “region of olive trees”. **Asmara**, the capital of Eritrea means “Forest of Flowers” (Everett-Heath, 2000). **Prague**, the capital of Czech Republic means “forest area opened with the help of fires” (Room, 2006:303). The name of **Andorra La Vella**, capital of Andorra was derived from the Basque word “andurrial” used in the local dialect which means “shrub-covered land” (Room, 2006:29). **Manila**, the capital of Philippines was formed by combining the words “there is” in Tagalog, Filipino language which means “there is” and “nila” which means “a shrub of the indigo family” (Room, 2006:236). Capital of Swaziland, **Mbabane** was named after a river that passes through the city. The river and hence the city were named after a type of shrub used as animal fodder (Room, 2006:242).

Panama City, capital of Panama, means “place of many fish” (Güner, 2001:39). Capital of Uganda, **Kampala**, was named after the African antelope known as Impala (Room, 2006:186).

Names of Capitals Based on Geological Attributes

The name of the capital of Uzbekistan, **Tashkent** was formed by combining the words “taş”

(stone) and “kand” (town) (Room, 2006:370). The meaning of the name of the capital of Lesotho, **Maseru**, is red sandstone (Room, 2006:240). **Timphu**, the capital of Bhutan was named after a rock in the Dechenphu temple (Web-3).

The name of the capital of Iceland, **Reykjavik**, was derived from the Icelandic words “reykjja” “something that smokes and “vik” (bay) and means “bay of smoke”. The name implies the steam coming out of natural water resources used in heating the city (Room, 2006:315). The name of the capital of Georgia, **Tbilisi** was derived from the word “tbili” which means “warm” in Georgian. The city was named after the hot sulphur springs in the region (Room, 2006:371).

The capital of Honduras, **Tegucigalpa**, was named after the silver mines close to the city and the name means “Silver Mountain” in Native American (Room, 2006:371).

Names of Capitals Based on Climatologic Attributes

The origin of the name of the Azerbaijan capital **Baku** is the Persian word “badkuba” which means “the city of the winds” (Web-4). The name of **Honiara**, the capital of Solomon Islands was derived from the word “Nagho-niara” which means “place of the east wind” or “place facing the trade winds” (Room, 2006:168). Meaning of the Namibian capital **Windhoek** is “the wind corner”, however winds are very rare in the region (Room, 2006:407).

Argentinean capital **Buenos Aires** means “good breezes” in Spanish since the weather in Rio de La Plata is good (Room, 2006:70). Capital of Chad **N’djamena** means “resting place” since its location allows travelers to find shade from the heat (Room, 2006:263).

Names of Capitals Based on Location

It is claimed that the name **New Delhi**, the Indian capital comes from the word “dehli” which means “threshold” in old Hindi. The city was named after its location between Indus and Ganges (Room, 2006:107). The name of **Zagreb**, the capital of Croatia, was derived from old Croatian word “zagrebom” which means “beyond the bank”. The name implies the location it was founded on the River Sava (Room, 2006:414). Name of the capital of Liechtenstein, **Vaduz**, was derived from the Latin word “vallis dulcis” which means “sweet valley” based on its agreeable location on the Rhine (Room, 2006:390). The name of Taiwanese capital **T’ai-**

pei means northern Taiwan based on its location in the north of Taiwan Island (Room, 2006:367).

2.1.2. Capitals whose names are based on human geography attributes

Sources of names for capitals in 38 countries were based on human geography characteristics (according to religion, historical structures, ports and political geography characteristics)

Names of Capitals Based on Religious Characteristics

Capital of Pakistan, **Islamabad**, means “city of Islam”. The name of the capital of Somalia, **Mogadishu** was derived from the Arabic word “mukaddas” which means “holy” (Room, 2006:252).

Vatican City, the capital of Vatican was named after “Vaticano Hill” on the right of Tiber River (according to Christian belief, Apostle Saint Petrus was buried in the hill after he was killed) (Güner, 2001:35). **San Salvador**, the capital of El Salvador was founded by Spanish colonists in August 6, 1526. The meaning of the name of the city is “Holy Savior” (Room, 2006:333). The capital of Antigua and Barbuda was named **St John’s** (Room, 2006:327) because it was discovered in June 24, 1497, birthday of Saint John’s; a date accepted as a holy day the Christians. Colonists named the capital of Grenada as **Saint Georges**. Capital of Costa Rica, **San Jose**, was founded by the Spaniards in 1736 and the city was named after St Joseph (Room, 2006:332). Chilean capital **Santiago** was founded in 1541 by Spanish explorer Pedro de Valdivia who named the city in the honor of St. James who is a highly respected saint in Spain (St. James means Santo Iago in Spanish) (Room, 2006:334).

The capital of Paraguay, **Asuncion**, was founded by the Spanish in 15 August 1537. The city was named after the holy day that corresponds to the Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven (Room, 2006:38). The meaning of **Santo Domingo**, The capital of Dominican Republic is Holy Sunday in Spanish. The name was given to the city since Spaniards founded a colony there on a Sunday in 1496 (Room, 2006:334). Capital of Sao Tome and Principe, **Sao Tome** was named after St. Thomas (Sao Tome in Portuguese) since it was discovered in 21 December 1471, the feast day for St. Thomas (Room, 2006:335).

When the Turks transformed St. Sophia Church into a mosque, Bulgarians named their

capitals as **Sophia** (Room, 2006:352). Capital of Peru, **Lima**, was derived from the word “rima” which is one of the attributes of God about speaking and which symbolizes worship. Some sources associate the name with confession of sins in Christianity (Room, 2006:219).

The meaning of Iraqi capital **Baghdad** means “the gift of God” (Room, 2006:44). The name of the Nicaraguan capital **Managua** was derived from the word “ama” and “nagua” which means “rain” and “spirit or ghost” respectively (Room, 2006:235).

Names of Capitals Based on Historical Structures

Meaning of **Tallinn**, the capital of Estonia, is “Danish fort” in old Estonian (Room, 2006:367). City of **Bishkek**, capital of Kyrgyzstan was founded in 1862 by Russians in the area where a fortress named Bishkek was located. It is believed that the city was named after that fortress (Room, 2006:60). The capital of Luxemburg and a city of fortresses; **Luxembourg** was named after the Frank word “Lucilinburhuc” (small castle) used for an old Roman tower (Güner, 2001:36). **Belgrade**, the capital of Serbia was named after the white stone castle in the city (Room, 2006:53).

It is believed that the name of the Turkish capital **Ankara** comes from Ankuwa which means Grand Phoenix Temple (Güner, 2004). The meaning of **Kathmandu**, capital of Nepal, is wooden temples (Room, 2006:190).

The capital of Bosnia- Herzegovina, **Sarajevo**, was derived from the words “Bosnian river” and Turkish word “palace” (Room, 2006:335). It is said that the name Sarajevo means the lowlands around the palace.

The name of the Moroccan capital, **Rabat**, comes from Arabic “arribat”. “Ribat” is a word used for fortified monasteries that protect borders (Room, 2006:310).

Bridgetown, the capital of Barbados, was called Bridgetown since Englishmen built a bridge there (Room, 2006:68).

Names of Capitals Based on Port Characteristics

The meaning of **Port of Spain**, the capital of Trinidad and Tobago, is the Port of Spain. The Portuguese word “Vila” in **Port-Vila**, capital of Vanuatu, means “town” and the name of the city means the “city port”. The name of Cuban capital, **Havana** was derived from the word “havene” which means “port” in the Middle Dutch.

Porto-Novo, the capital of Benin was founded in the 16th century by the Portuguese. The port in the city was established as a slave trading center. The Portuguese called the settlement as the “new port” (Room, 2006:301). The name of the capital of Brunei, **Bandar Seri Begawan** was derived from the words “bandar” (port in Malay language) and Seri Begawan” (blessed) (Room, 2006:47). The name of Denmark capital, **Copenhagen** means “Merchants’ port” (Room, 2006:97). Haitian capital **Port-au-Prince** was named after a ship called “Prince” that was kept in the port in the beginning of the 18th century (Room, 2006:300).

Names of Capitals Based on Political Geography Characteristics

Meaning of the word **Beijing**, the capital of China is the capital of the north. The capital of Japan, **Tokyo**, means the capital of the east (Room, 2006:52, 378). The meanings of the names for South Korean capital **Seoul** and Kazakhstan capital **Astana** are “the capital” (Room, 2006:38, 340).

The capital of Gabon, **Libreville**, was founded by a group of liberated black slaves, in 1849 therefore the name of the city means “free settlement” (Room, 2006:218). The capital of Sierra Leone, **Freetown**, was founded in 1787 by British Abolitionists and the name means “free city” (Room, 2006:136).

2.2. Names of Capitals Whose Sources are Based on Individuals, Communities and Conquests

2.2.1. Names of Capitals Whose Sources are Based on Individuals

The capital of United States of America, **Washington**, was founded in 1791 in the District of Columbia in a location selected by the first president George Washington (1732-1799) and the city as named after him (Room, 2006:402).

The capital of Botswana, **Gaborone** was named after a local tribal chief (Kgosi Gaborone) who ruled in the area from 1880 to 1931 (Room, 2006:139).

The name of capital of United Kingdom, **London**, means “Lud’s Town”, combining the name of the King Lud and the old English word tun (town). In his masterpieces, Shakespeare mentions London as the “Lud’s town”(Room, 2006:223).

The capital of Equatorial New Guinea, **Malabo** was named after Bubi King Malabo who died in 1937 (Room, 2006:233).

It is thought that the capital of Armenia, **Yerevan** was named after a king.

The name of the capital of Ivory Coast, **Yamoussoukro** was derived from the name of Queen Yamouso and the word “kro” in Baule language which means “village”. The name of the capital means “the village of Yamouso” (Room, 2006:411).

The capital of Guyana, **Georgetown** was founded in 1781 by the Englishmen and was named after the King George III (1738-1820) (Room, 2006:143).

The capital of the Republic of South Africa, **Pretoria**, was named after the boer (afrikaander) statesman Andries Pretorius (1798-1853) (Room, 2006:303).

The capital of Jamaica, **Kingston** was named in the honor of English King William III (1650-1702) (Room, 2006:196).

The capital of the Republic of the Congo, **Brazzaville**, was founded by the French explorer Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza (1852-1905) in 1833. The name of the place comes from the Brazza Island (Brac in the modern times) ruled by Croatia in Adriatic.

The capital of Liberia, **Monrovia** was founded in 1822 by the slaves who won their freedom in America. The city was named Monrovia in the honor of the 5th American president James Monroe (1758-1831) (Room, 2006:253).

The capital of Hungary, **Budapest** was named after the founder of the city, Buda or Buddha. “Buda” means “water”. “Pet” is a Slavic word and means “furnace or oven” (Room, 2006:70).

The name of the capital of Mali, **Bamako**, means “behind Bamma” from the word “Bamma-ko” in Bambara language. “Bamma” is the name of an individual “(Room, 2006:46).

The capital of Malta, **Valetta**, was named after the French general Jean Parizot de la Valetta (1494-1568) who founded the city (Room, 2006:391).

The capital of Mauritius, **Port Louis** and the port of the city were founded in 1735 by

Mauritius French Colony Governor Bertrand François Mahe. The city was named after Louis XV of France. The name means “the port of Louis” (Room, 2006:301).

The meaning of the capital of Mongolia, **Ulan Bator** is “the red hero”. The city was named in 1924 in honor of Mongolian revolutionary hero Damdiny Sühbaatar who lived and died there (Room, 2006:387).

The name of the capital of Mauritania **Nouakshott** was derived from the phrase “wak-

chodh” in the Berber dialect which means “having no ears”. The name or nickname of a local chief who once lived there was given to the city (Room, 2006:273).

The capital of Mozambique, **Maputo**, was named after a river that crosses the city and flows into the bay. The river and the city were named after one of the sons of local chief Muagobe in the 18th century (Room, 2006:237).

The capital of Nigeria, **Abuja**, was named after the Abuja King Abu Ja (Room, 2006:18).

The capital of Papua New Guinea, **Port Moresby**, was discovered in 1873 by Captain John Moresby who named the settlement after his father (Admiral Sir Fairfax Moresby) (Room, 2006:301).

The name of the capital of Romania, **Bucharest**, was derived from the word “Bucur”, the name of the shepherd believed to have founded the city (Room, 2006:70).

The capital of Saint Lucia, **Castries**, was named after the French Marshall Castries.

The meaning of the capital city of Saint Vincent and Grenadines, **Kingtown**, means “the king’s town”.

The capital of San Marino, **San Marino**, was named after the Dalmatian assistant deacon St. Marinus who founded a hermitage in the area in the 4th century (Room, 2006:332).

The capital of the Seychelles, **Victoria**, was named after Queen Victoria (1819-1901) (Room, 2006:395).

The capital of Slovakia, **Bratislava** was named after the founder of the city (Room, 2006:67). The name comes from the Bohemia Duke. Bretislaus I.

The name of the capital city of Tuvalu, **Funafuti**, was coined by combining the word “futi” (a Polynesian word that means banana) with the name of the spouse (Funa) of one of the rulers (Room, 2006:138).

The capital of Ukraine, **Kiev**, was named after a prince named “Kiy” believed to have founded the city in the 9th century (Room, 2006:195).

The capital of Jordan, **Amman**, was named after Ammon, the ancestor of the ancient Semitic people known as the Ammonites who lived in the east of Jordan River. The name means “the sons of Ammon” (Room, 2006:28).

The capital city of Zambia, **Lusaka**, was founded by the Europeans in 1905. The city was named after Lusaakas, the name of the chief of a nearby village (Room, 2006:227).

The capital city of Zimbabwe, **Harare**, was derived from the name of an African chief, Neharawa, whose name meant “He who does not sleep” (Room, 2006:159).

2.2.2. Names of Capitals Whose Sources are Based on Individuals

The capital of Equator, **Quito**, was named after the Native American People who are extinct today (Room, 2006:309).

The capital of Ghana, **Accra**, was derived from an indigenous African word “n’kran” which means “ants”. The name was used for the Nigerian tribal people who settled in the area by crossing over the local forests in the 16th century (Room, 2006:19).

The capital of Gine Bissau, **Bissau**, was named after the local people, who lived in the area (Room, 2006:153).

The capital of Cameroon, **Yaounde**, was named after the Yaunde people who lived in the area (Room, 2006:411).

The capital of Venezuela, **Caracas**, was named by Spanish explorer Diego Do Losada after the Caracas people who lived there (Room, 2006:78).

2.2.3. Names of Capitals Whose Sources are Based on Conquests

The capital of Albania, **Tirana**, was founded by the Turkish General Suleiman Pasha in 1600. Suleiman Pasha named the settlement after Tehran by giving it a similar name, the center of the Persians, to remember the Turkish victory in Iran (Room, 2006:376). Some sources state that the name of the capital means “the absolute power” (Web-5).

The capital of Bahamas, **Nassau**, was named after the Nassau Duchy in the west of Germany (Room, 2006:262).

The capital city of Columbia, **Bogota**, was founded by the Spanish conquistador Gonzalo Jimenes de Quesada in 1538. The conqueror was named the city “Bacata” after his birth place Santa Fe de Bacata in Spain. This name was later transformed into Bogota (Room, 2006:63).

The capital of New Zealand, **Wellington**, was founded in the south of the North Island in 1840. An earldom in United Kingdom (Somerset, England), Wellington was named by Artur Wellesley, 1. Duke of Wellington (Room, 2006:404).

2.3. Names of Capitals Whose Sources are Based on Myths and Legends

The names of three capitals were based on mythology and the names of three countries were based on legends.

The capital of Bangladesh, **Dhaka**, was named after “Dhakeswari”; a hidden goddess in a Hindu temple (Room, 2006:109). The capital of Tunisia, **Tunis**, was named after the Phoenician goddess Tanith (Room, 2006:385). Capital of Greece, **Athens**, was named after the Greek goddess Athene (Room, 2006:38).

The capital of Italy, **Rome**, was named after Romulus; the legendary founder of the city, who founded the city in 753 B.C. The existence of Romulus is debatable since it is not clear whether he lived or not (Room, 2006:319).

The name of the capital of Mexico, **Mexico City**, means “city of nopal rock”. “Nopal” is a special cactus species which symbolizes the human sacrificial to the Sun God. According to the legend, when the Aztecs arrived at the location of the city, they came across the cacti that sprouted from the cracks in the rocks. The rock had an eagle with a snake in its beak (Room, 2006:247).

The name of the capital of Egypt, **Cairo**, was derived from the words “Khere-ohé” or “Kheri-aha” which meant “place of combat” addressing the legendary war between the gods Horus and Seth (Room, 2006:74).

2.4. Names of Capitals Whose Sources are Unknown

Sources for the names of 14 capitals (**Kinshasa**-Democratic Republic of The Congo, **Bairiki-Kiribati**, **Skopje**-Macedonia, **Sana**-Yemen, **Bujumbura**-Burundi, **Roseau**-Dominica, **Suva**-Fiji, **Juba**-South Sudan, **Majuro**-Marshall Islands, **Palikir**-Micronesia, **Yaren**-Nauru, **Melekeok**-Palau, **Apia**-Samoa, **Dili**-East Timor) unknown.

2.5. Other Sources for the Names of Capitals

Although the sources of the names of capitals are known for 35 countries, their origins are not related to geographical characteristics, individuals or communities or mythology and legends. Meanings of these capitals are provided below:

The meaning of the capital of United Arab Emirates, **Abu Dhabi**, is “the father of the gazelle” in Arabic (Room, 2006:18).

The meaning of the capital of Burma, **Yangon**, is peaceful, serene (Room, 2006:411).

The meaning of the capital of Tanzania, **Dares Salaam**, is “the house of peace” (Room, 2006:104).

The capital of Bolivia, **La Paz**, has a Spanish name which means “peace” (Everett-Heath, 2000).

The name of the Australian capital **Canberra** probably comes from the aboriginal “nganbirra” which means “the meeting place” (Room, 2006:77).

The name of the capital of Bahrain, **Manama**, was derived from the Arabic “al-manama” and the name of the capital means “the place of rest, the place of dreams” (Room, 2006:235).

The capital of Belarus, **Minsk**, was named after “Men”, the previous name of the Svisloch River that crosses the city (Room, 2006:250).

The name of the capital of Belize, **Belmopan**, was formed by combining the name of the old capital *Belize* which was founded in 1970 and which was often damaged by hurricanes and the *Mopan* River which crosses the city (Room, 2006:54).

The name of the capital of Brasilia, **Brasilia**, comes from the Portuguese name of the red bloodwood tree (pau-brasil) (Güner, 2001:41).

The name of the capital of Burkina Faso, **Ouagadougou**, was derived from the word “wogodogo”. It means the place where honest and respectful people live.

The name of the capital of Djibouti, **Djibouti**, was derived from the word “gobouri” which means “plate” in Afar language (The reference is to a plate woven from doum palm fibers and raised on a pedestal for ceremonial purposes) (Room, 2006:111). It means mat woven by date fibers.

The historical name of the capital of Indonesia, **Jakarta**, was Jayakarta in the Malay language. It means victory and prosperity (Room, 2006:180).

The meaning of the capital of Ethiopia, **Addis Ababa**, is -new flower (Everett-Heath, 2000).

The name of French capital, **Paris**, comes from the Greek word “baris” which means “boat” (Room, 2006:288).

The capital of Gambia, **Banjul**, has a local name due to a misunderstanding. When Portuguese arrived at this part of Africa in the 15th century, they asked the native people what they were called. The natives thought they were asked about what they were doing and answered by saying “Bangjulo” (“rope matting”) (Room, 2006:48).

The capital of Cyprus, **Levkosia**, comes from the Greek word “leukos” which means “white and shining” (Room, 2006:269).

The capital of Kosovo, **Pristina**, was named after the river that crosses the city. It comes from the Serbo-Croat word “prist” which means ulcer, boiling, tumor” (Room, 2006:304).

The name of the capital of Kuwait, **Kuwait**, was derived from the word “kut” which means the structure that resembles the Middle Ages English manors surrounded by a moat and smaller houses (Room, 2006:206).

The name of the capital of Libya, **Tripoli**, was derived from the Greek words “treis” which means “three” and “polis” which means “city”. It means three cities or three towns. The name was given to the three main cities of Oea, Leptis Magna and Sabrathain the Phoenician colonies in North Africa (Room, 2006:382).

The capital of Madagascar, **Antananarivo**, means “city of a thousand”. The name emphasizes the existence of a large number of inhabitants (Room, 2006:31).

The meaning of the capital of Maldives, **Male**, is “a garland of islands” in Sanskrit (Room, 2006:234).

The name of the capital of Niger, **Niamey**, was derived from the expression “Wa ni-ammane” used by an African chief to talk to his 7 slaves which meant “stay here” (Room, 2006:269).

According to public etymology, the name of the capital of Poland, **Warsaw**, was derived from the names of the twin babies of the king “War and Sawa” (Room, 2006:401).

The name of Portuguese capital, **Lisbon**, was derived from the Phoenician word “alis-ubbo” which means “joyful bay” (Room, 2006:221).

The name of the capital of Rwanda, **Kigali**, was derived from the prefix “ki” in Bantu language and the word “gali” in Rwandan which means “broad, wide” (Room, 2006:195).

The name of the capital of Singapore, **Singapore**, was derived from the word “simhapura” in Sanskrit which means “lion town worth seeing”. Actually, there are no lions in the city, what is referred is the public who are like lions (Room, 2006:348).

The capital of Slovenia, **Ljubljana**, means “favorite place” (Room, 2006:222).

The capital of Sudan, **Khartoum**, was founded as the camp ground for the Egyptian Army in 1821. The city has an Arabic name derived from the word “al-khurtum” which means “the end of an elephant’s trunk” (Room, 2006:194).

The name of the capital of Syria, **Damascus**, means “the north” (Room, 2006:103)

The name of the capital of Tajikistan, **Dushanbe**, means “Monday” in the Tajik language. the word “du” means “two” and “shanbe” means “Saturday” and together they mean “two days after Saturday”. The name refers to the regular Monday markets (Room, 2006:116).

The name of the capital of Togo, **Lome**, means “little market” (Everett-Heath, 2000).

The name of the capital of Tonga, **Nuku’alofa**, means “abode of love or loving home”. According to some sources, it also means “south” based on its location compared to many other areas in Polynesia (Room, 2006:275).

The capital of Turkmenistan, **Ashkhabad**, means “abode of love” and “place of pleasure” in Turkmen language. The name was derived from the words “uskh” (dear) and “abad” (town) (Room, 2006:37).

The name of the capital of Angola, **Luanda**, was based on a native word which means “tax, duty”. The name refers to the sea shells by the Atlas Ocean once used by the natives in paying the King of Congo (Room, 2006:226).

It is claimed that the name of the capital of Spain, **Madrid**, was derived from the word “matrix” which means “river bed”. Some sources state that the name was derived from the Latin word “materia” (materials) due to the abundance of timber around the city that could be used for construction (Room, 2006:231)

3. Results

In the investigation of the sources for the capital names of 196 independent countries, the most interesting finding is the observation that the names of 101 capitals were determined based on the natural and human geographical characteristics of the location or its immediate vicinity. Another important finding is related to the fact that 31 capitals were named after the names of individuals. Geographical attributes were more or less taken into consideration while determining the names for settlements all over the world during the history. The names of native or foreign individuals who shape the future of the country are cherished in the names of the capitals. Compilation of the capital names have made it possible to obtain some valuable information regarding the geographical characteristics and historical process regarding these settlements.

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