

## Comparative analysis of onomatosystems in the centuries after the establishment of the Hungarian State<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

For Hungarians, who enjoyed an adventurous, nomad lifestyle during the gradual occupation of the Carpathian Basin, the only way to survive in the 10<sup>th</sup> century was to join Christian Europe. The crowning of King Stephen I represented the establishment of the Hungarian Kingdom. Not only was it a foundation of a new state, but it also initiated the spreading of Christianity, and the transformation of economy and society. In my paper I seek to find an answer to the question of how Hungarian name-giving habits were influenced by the radical changes in the life of Hungarians, which affected state administration, Church organization, economy and society. What must by all means be taken into account is that Hungarian came to be exposed to the influence of Indo-European languages instead of Turkish. Therefore it is important to point out how these changes are reflected in and by name-giving. In this paper, I make an attempt to introduce and compare the name-giving methods of the first part of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century, which already had a developed public administration.

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1. The eleventh century was a period of great changes in Hungarian history. For Hungarians, who enjoyed an adventurous, nomad lifestyle during the gradual occupation of the Carpathian Basin, the only way to survive in the 10<sup>th</sup> century was to join Christian Europe. The crowning of King Stephen I represented the establishment of the Hungarian Kingdom. Not only was it a foundation of a new state, but it also initiated the spreading of Christianity, and the transformation of economy and society (cf. Kristó 1999: 6–7, 163). Hungarians invading the Carpathian Basin in 895-6 were a nomad nation engaged in horse-breeding. The Hungarians, who were in the 9-10<sup>th</sup> centuries mainly involved in military attacks and raids, settled in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, practised agriculture, established a state and became Christians (Kristó 1999: 13, 21). Consequently, King Stephen I built the Hungarian Kingdom on Christian foundations, planted the notion of political unity instead of tribal spirit, and founded central power and royal authority. Furthermore, by building an independent Hungarian Catholic Church and a royal comitat system, he connected Hungary to feudal Europe. Villages, castles and cities built in the 10-11<sup>th</sup> centuries provided the basis of the settlement system. Until King Stephen I, social life was regulated by customary law and tradition, where large families and clans organised according to kinship ties had the major role in dispute settlement. King Stephen I however introduced the first Hungarian laws and laid the foundations for written law (MKkT. 80–1). In the 11<sup>th</sup> century Hungary also became involved in European politics. King László for example pursued an active foreign policy in relation to Russians, Poles and Czechs. In this period, the most important trans-European route, the overland route to the Holy Land, ran through Hungary (Kristó 1999: 74, 164). In the centuries to follow, the state administration and the church were further built on. For example, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century

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there were seventy comitats on the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom, while in the reign of King Stephen I the number of comitat had reached 12 (or somewhat more) (cf. Zsoldos 2002: 426). The feudal estate system established in the 11<sup>th</sup> century was strengthened in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The spreading of modern agricultural techniques and the growing number of more efficient producing communities by the 13<sup>th</sup> century set the conditions for market-oriented farming (MKkT. 194).

Finding itself in a European context, Hungarians were also affected by a novel linguistic impact, namely Indo-European languages instead of Turkish: Slavic, German, and, in certain areas, Latin. In the 9-10<sup>th</sup> centuries Slavic people were linguistically and numerically superior, moreover, a great majority of Turkish people living in the Carpathian Basin (e.g. Avars) was Slavonicised as a result of living together for a long time (cf. Kristó 2003: 35).

**2.** Hungarian toponyms are documented from the beginning of the establishment of the Hungarian State. Although very few written sources have remained from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, these first linguistic records are especially vital from the point of view of the history of toponyms because of the toponyms found in them. Among these, the oldest authentic remnant<sup>2</sup> remaining in its original form, the deed of foundation of the Tihany Abbey from 1055, bears utmost significance. Authentic sources remained in copies from before 1055; for example, the charter of Pannonhalma Abbey in 1001, and the charters of Veszprém and Pécs in 1009, or the deed of foundation of the Veszprémvölgy nunnery from 1018 also play an important role in the Hungarian history of toponyms.

The increasing issue of charters in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the increase in the number of charters was ensured not only by regular donation of royal estates, but also by the circumstances in which the practise of issuing a charter became general in the developed institution of the royal chancery. In addition, so-called authentic locations, i.e. church bodies issuing charters, were developed at various points in the country (cf. MKkT. 184). This increase is shown in the fact that from the thirty years (1141–1172) of the reign of Géza II and King Stephen III almost the same number of charters are known to have been issued as in the 140 years of the reigns from King Stephen I till Géza II (1000–1141) (Kristó 1987: 161). From the turn of 12-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, the important linguistic records are the following charters containing a larger onomastic corpus: the crusaders' charter of Fehérvár from 1193, the anonymous *Gesta Hungarorum* from about 1210, and the land register of the Tihany Abbey from 1211.

By studying the onomastic corpus of the charters we may not only gain more information about our language, but also about the life and culture of its users. According to a view present in works about the history of the Hungarian language, any period's language reflects the spiritual and material culture of its users (cf. Hoffmann 2007: 61–2).

**3.** In my paper I wish to introduce and compare name-giving methods and types of two, temporarily remote periods following the establishment of the Hungarian State, namely the first part of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which already had a developed public administration. For the sake of easier traceability, I will select one linguistic record from both periods and analyse them in more detail, and then compare their toponymicons. Naturally, I do not believe that any source's onomastic corpus forms a system in itself. However, I agree with István Hoffmann that certain names bear the general attributes of name-giving (cf. Hoffmann 2010: 226). The greatest help in studies like this is

<sup>2</sup> Remnants are linguistic records which have Hungarian language elements sporadically or more frequently embedded in their foreign language texts (Greek, Latin) (MNyT. 38).

provided by charters containing authentic data referring to the largest possible territories. This is why I chose the deed of foundation of the Tihany Abbey from 1055 and the land register of the Tihany Abbey from 1211. These charters include a large number of credible data from the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, originating from the territory of several comitats and referring to different natural and landscape environments.

**3.1.** Among 82 toponymic remnants of the deed of foundation of the Tihany Abbey there are only two whose etymology is not Hungarian, but of another language: the Keszölc settlement and the name of Lake Balaton. They are of Slavic origin and became part of the Hungarian language through adaptation (Hoffmann 2010: 230). Among the 102 names which can be analysed on the basis of the land register from the 13<sup>th</sup> century there is only one of foreign origin, the name of the already mentioned Lake Balaton. According to Gyula Kristó, studying the ethnic relations of King Stephen's period in connection with the deed of foundation of the Tihany Abbey there are 11 remnants of Slavic origin, four of Turkish and one of German etymology (cf. 2000: 23–4). However, after a detailed analysis of the deed of foundation István Hoffmann proved that there are only two names of foreign origin, which are already present in linguistic forms referring to Hungarian language users. For example, the word-initial *bl* consonant cluster present in the original Slavic name of the lake is broken by a vowel harmonising with the vowel in the following syllable, since the Hungarian language does not favour word-initial consonant clusters and strives towards eliminating them (Abaffy 2003: 309). In several of his works, linguistic results made Gyula Kristó conclude the following about the ethnic relations in the Árpád age: this procedure is not unknown to the practitioners of the science of history, who attempted to create a picture of the ethnic relations and the settlement history of the Carpathian Basin with the help of onomastics. By examining the four early charters (the charter of Pannonhalma Abbey in 1001, the charters of Veszprém and Pécs in 1009 and the deed of foundation of the Veszprémvölgy nunnery from 1018), Gyula Kristó established that the toponyms of the Carpathian Basin at the turn of the 10-11<sup>th</sup> centuries were mainly of Slavic (and Turkish) origin, since “these nations gave names to settlements related to firmly fixed, unchanging settled lifestyle” (1993: 204, cf. 1995: 268, 2000: 26–7). However, we need to be very careful with studies like these. According to Hoffmann, Kristó did not take into account an important chronological circumstance: “an earlier situation and condition of name-giving cannot provide information about the age of the charter” (2005: 119). In addition, it should be noted that a renewed discussion and critical review of the toponymic corpus of these early remnants is an important task of onomastics research.

**3.2.** From a linguistic-onomastic aspect, the toponyms of Hungarian etymology can be classified into two distinctly separated groups: these being natural and cultural names. I grouped the names depending on whether they refer to places existing independently of human activity or if they refer to a place created by human work. The occurrence rate of these two categories does not differ a lot in the two charters: 60% of all the names taken into account from the deed of foundation and 50% of all the names taken into account from the 13<sup>th</sup> century charter are natural names. These proportions do not have particular significance in themselves, of course, since the aim and character of the charter largely influences whether the settlements and estates will only be listed in them or described in more detail (Hoffmann 2010: 227, Kovács 2011). From a structural aspect, the Tihany charters show

monocomponential and two-componential<sup>3</sup> names.

In both charters, due to the process of settlement, the names of places constantly inhabited, i.e. settlement names, represent the larger group. I use the term settlement names in its widest sense possible, even referring to fish farms (cf. Hoffmann 2010: 228). In the deed of foundation settlement names are “clearly distinguished from all other name types” (Hoffmann 2010: 231), since apart from one name, the two-componential *feheruaru* (*Fehérvár* = *fehér* ‘of the colour “white”’ + *vár* ‘fort’), all are monocomponential. Other name types are characteristically two-componential. This cannot be claimed of the land register, where among 45 settlement names there is also only one two-componential (*Papsoka* = *pap* ‘religious person’ + *sok* ‘village’) and in this charter the above mentioned structure is characteristic not only of the majority of settlement names, but also of the natural names. The majority of monocomponential settlement names in both charters was formed from personal names via metonymic name-giving. Name-giving from personal names without derivational affixes or new components is a special Hungarian characteristic (cf. Kniezsa 1943–1944/2001: 18, Kristó 1976: 15–38), “the community who formed names in this way can only be Hungarian, this type of name was uniquely given by Hungarians not only in the Carpathian Basin but also in Central and Eastern Europe. This manner of name-giving cannot be shown either among Slavic, or German, or Romance speaking people” (Kiss 1996: 444–445). The practice of toponym name-giving from a bare personal name dates back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century, to the pre-Conquest period, and it spread in the 11–12<sup>th</sup> centuries and remained operational until the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Kristó 1976: 37–8). The anthroponym serving as the basis for a toponym may be of Slavic (*tichon*, *knez*, *u[g]rin*; *Aarach* ~ *Araci*), Turkish (*olup*, *culun*), or German (*ecli*; *Pechel*) origin, or belong to the Christian Latin toponymicon (*Pilip*, *Mortus*, *Petra*) or be of Hungarian etymology (*Opus*, *Bychachi* ~ *Bicaci* ~ *Bychachi* ~ *Biccaci*, *Saca*). The majority of personal names forming settlement names did not have a common name reference, which can only be assumed in the case of one or two anthroponyms of Hungarian origin.

The ethnic motivation in name-giving is represented both in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century sources, for example when mentioning the name of *turku* ~ *Turk* and *Besenyő* (*Beseneu*) villages. The etymology of personal names serving as a basis for toponyms can in no circumstances be the foundation of ethnic conclusions (cf. Hoffmann 2010: 228), although many researchers seem to have found connections like that (e.g. Gyula Kristó).

In the case of certain settlements, relations to nature provided the motivation for name-giving. The semantic content of these names may refer to fauna (such as for example in *gisnav* ‘pig’, *huluoodi* ‘raven’, or from the land register *Fured* ‘quail’ and *Somardy* ‘donkey’ toponyms), flora (*sumig* ‘cornel’; *Fuzegy* ‘willow’) or topographical relief (*segesti*, cf. *sēg* ‘hill’). Except for *gisnav*, these names were formed by a derivational suffix (*-d*, *-gy*, *-di*, *-st* derivational suffix).

The change from ‘hydronym to settlement name’ is rather frequent in the Old Hungarian period, but *Colon*, *Fuzegy*, *Mortua* toponyms from the 1211 land register may also be listed here. The *Aszófő* (*Ozoufeu* ~ *Ozoufeuh*) settlement name was formed from an earlier natural name of the same form, whose original meaning was ‘a part of the valley named *Aszó*’ or ‘the source of the stream named *Aszó*’. Moreover, in the Árpád age the word *aszó* was used with at least two functions: in its ‘occasional watercourse, dry creek’ sense it was present in

<sup>3</sup> I consider those names as monocomponential and two-componential which show components expressing one or two clearly separate functional-semantic features. The *Sáros-patak* hydronym is two-componential because its functional structure can be described as ‘a stream whose water is muddy’. Contrary to this, the *Sárospatak* city name is considered monocomponential, since the name expresses a single semantic attribute: the fact that the settlement ‘lies next to a certain watercourse’ (cf. Hoffmann 1993/2007: 53–4, 61).

hydronyms (cf. FNESz. *Aszó*), and in its ‘valley’ meaning it was present in names for landscape features.

The characteristic common attribute of the settlement names from the two periods analysed in this presentation (mid-11<sup>th</sup> century and the turn-of 12-13<sup>th</sup> centuries) is the monocomponentiality. Later the proportion of two-componential names (*Fehérvár*, *Papsoka*) already present here increases: primarily due to the appearance of names containing a basic constituent of the *falufalva* type with the meaning of ‘settlement, inhabited place’ (e.g. *Újfalva*, *Tótfalva*, *Mikolafalva*, *Egyedfalva*, but the names of the similar ‘settlement, inhabited place’ meaning having as a second component a geographical common name *ház(a)*, *lak(a)*) may also be listed here: *Gyulaháza*, *Kozmaháza*, *Pósalaka*, etc., cf. Rácz 2005: 103, Tóth 2008: 106, 190) as well as the result of separation of existing settlement names by an attributive. Due to the division of settlement names in the names of new villages the basic name received a differentiating role: *Albárca* ‘lower (nearer or more to the south when relating to a given point) Bárca settlement’, *Felbárca* ‘upper (farther or more to the north when relating to a given point) Bárca’, *Középbárca* ‘middle Bárca’, Tóth 2008: 32).

Apart from settlement names, in the cultural group of names we may also find other name types in charters: roads, transit places referring to the settlement structure developed due to permanent settlements (*ohut* ‘old road’, *Hodut* ‘big road suitable for armies marching’), fishing places (*seku ueieze*, *putu uueieze*: anthroponym + possessive form of the word ‘fishing place’), market places (*mortis uuasara*: ‘the market place of Mortis (anthroponym or settlement name)’) and farmlands (*petre zenaia*: *Petre* anthroponym + *széna* possessive form of the word ‘meadow’, *bagat mezee*: *Bagat* ~ *Bogat* anthroponym + possessive form of the word *mező* ‘region, free and open plain’).

**3.3.** The inner structure of the natural names’ group shows digression: while the larger groups of natural names in the deed of foundation belong to two-componential names, by the 13<sup>th</sup> century the frequency of two-componential names decreases (that is to say the number of monocomponential and two-componential names is similar) (cf. Hoffmann 2010: 229, Kovács 2011). The largest number of monocomponential and two-componential natural names are hydronyms and they are followed by relief names. In these two charters there are rare examples of other toponyms.

In both sources we see that the basic constituent of two-componential natural names is a geographical common name denoting the type of the place. The most frequent geographical common names: *fő* ‘source, starting point; entrance of a valley’: *Sár-fő* (*sar feu*), *Árok feje* (*aruk fee*); *tő* ‘end, estuary of a river, ditch’: *Kőrös töve* (*keuris tue*), *Besenyi-tő* (*Besenytu* ~ *Beseneui-tu*), *Szalakos-tő* ~ *Szolokos-tő* (*Zolocostueh*); *ér* ‘natural watercourse, stream with little water’, ‘watery meadow’: *Feket ere* (*Feket-herch*), *Kökény ere* (*Cucen Hereh*), *Ludas ere* (*Ludos Here*); *tó* ‘larger natural still water’: *Pozsony tava* (*Posuntoua* ~ *Posontaua*), *Vejrmür tava* (*Veyrmur thouua* ~ *Veyrmur taua*); *fok* ‘natural or artificial drainage’: *Harangod foka* (*Harrangudfoca*), *Tölgyes foka* (*Tulgusfoca* ~ *Tulusfocca* ~ *Tulusfoca*). We have found a similarity in the grammatical structure of the two-componential names in the two charters, namely, it is characteristically a marked attributive possessive relationship. However, we should also mention that the frequency of this type decreases in the centuries to follow.

The complement in the majority of two-componential natural names refers to a characteristic or an attribute of the place in question: with an adjective without a derivational suffix (*fekete kumuc* ‘black sand’, *Zaarhegy* ‘bald hill’) or with an adjective formed from a noun (*kues kut* ‘stone + -s well, source’, *cues humuc* ‘stone + -s sand’, *Ludos Here* ‘goose + -s brook’), noun attribute (*zilu kut* ‘elm (tree name) well, source’, *Cucen Hereh* ‘blackthorn (plant name) brook’), or with a number (*harmu ferteu* ‘three marshes’, *harmu hig* ‘three



hills'). Among two-componential natural names there are several in which the first constituent was formed from an anthroponym: *babu humca* (*Babu, Bab*, ÁSz. 79), *koku zarma ~ Choczorma* (*Kaku, Kacu*, ÁSz. 442), *luazu holma* (*Luazu*, ÁSz. 498), *Posuntoua* (*Poson, Posun*, ÁSz. 648), *Zouafeereh* (*Zoua*, ÁSz. 858), *Wuolcanfaya ~ Wolcanfaya* (*Wlkani, Vulcan*, ÁSz. 819), *Veyrmur thouua* (*Weimir*, ÁSz. 798) and maybe *Zolocostueh* (*Zoloc, Zalok*, ÁSz. 838).

The largest part of monocomponential natural names has the same form as a geographical common name: *fuk ~ Foc* (*fok* 'natural or artificial drainage'), *sar* (*sár* 'marsh, marshy area, muddy watercourse'), *Ferteu* (*fertő* 'wallowing, bathing place <primarily for animals (pig, buffalo, etc.)>', and 'marshy place, swamp, marsh' developed from this later), *Mortua* (*morotva* 'dead channel as a result of river bed change, dead river'), stagnum *Euren* (*örény* 'swirl, eddy'). When analysing the status of the linguistic use of geographical common names present in charters, we may come across certain obstacles (cf. Hoffmann 2008: 16). Namely, they may be of proper name or common name value, or due to insufficient information they may be insecure elements, thus belong to both groups, as for example from the deed of foundation: *aruk* (*árok* 'ditch, river bed; valley') or *zakadat* (*szakadat ~ szakadát* geographical common name 'szakadék; watercourse, brook originating from a larger river or from still water'). The proper name use of geographical common names may have also been characteristic of the early old Hungarian toponymicon: several names may prove this, which have been used in their unchanged forms for almost a millennium: *Ér*, *Fertő*, etc. Among monocomponential names we may also find those formed by name derivation. The toponym *Füzege* (*fizeg*) may be considered as having been formed from the *fűz* tree name by a derivational suffix *-gy*, while *Harangod* (*Harrangud*) may be considered as having been formed from *harang*, a plant which likes a wet environment, by a derivational suffix *-d*. In the hydronym *Hagymás* (*Hagymas ~ Hagimas*) the noun *hagyma* 'onion' and the toponym formant *-s* have been connected. The derivational consonant cluster *-st/-sd* found in *Kövesd* refers to the stony (pebbly) ground of the territory.

4. In this paper, I have made an attempt to introduce and compare the name-giving methods of the first part of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century, which already had a developed public administration. The study showed that the two periods, although remote from each other in time (6 to 7 generations), applied similar name-giving methods. Settling by the Hungarians and the settlement system developed as its consequence played a vital role in the formation of toponyms (e.g. names of settlements, markets, farmlands). Although in Europe the Hungarian language was influenced by Indo-European languages instead of Turkish, this is only moderately present in toponyms, since in charters toponyms of Hungarian origin prevail.

Based on this presentation, we may conclude, referring to Hungarian name-giving, that metonymy is an important means of name-forming even within the system of toponyms. Namely, settlement names were frequently formed from bare anthroponyms (*Pechel, Tichon*, etc.), animal and plant names (*gisnav*, etc.) or natural names (*Aszófő, Colon*, etc.). This also means that old name-giving was based on the existing stock of names, which, apart from the findings detailed before, is also shown in the fact that already in this period among two-componential names we may find names which were formed secondarily, with the use of other toponyms. The study of both the deed of foundation and the land register proved that the two main types of old Hungarian name-giving were monocomponential names formed from personal names, and two-componential microtoponyms formed from geographical common names as their basic constituent.

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