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TOPOGRAPHIC DATA IN OTTOMAN REGISTERS AS A RESOURCE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF VANISHED SETTLEMENTS IN BODROG COUNTY

Miklós Fóti*
István Pánya**

Keywords: Bačka Region, medieval Bodrog County, Ottoman tax registers, early modern period settlement network.

Abstract

The National Archives of Hungary, the Research Centre for the Humanities, and the Katona József Museum of Kecskemét have collaborated to reconstruct the medieval and early modern period settlement network and administration of the southern part of the Danube–Tisza Interfluvium region. During the works, all available medieval sources and Ottoman tax registers (including four sanjak surveys, four poll tax defters, three timar defters, and dozens of daybook registers) were processed. In parallel, a profound analysis of the medieval charters was carried out, as well as the topographic identification of the settlements with the help of historical maps and satellite images. The selected sample area was the nahiye of Zombor and the nahiye of Baja which existed in the western part of the sanjak of Szeged, roughly covering the territory of the medieval Bodrog County. Research has shown that mass analysis of defters results in far more topographic data than the examination of individual defters. Using both medieval charters and Ottoman sources, we can reconstruct a more accurate picture of the settlement network of the sample area.

Introduction

The settlement network of the central and southern half of the Kingdom of Hungary was largely transformed by the Turkish expansion in the 16th century, many settlements disappeared, and the population of the region changed significantly. If we want to reconstruct the settlement network and economic and social processes during the Turkish rule, it is of primary importance to examine the 16–17th century cadastral tax registers of the Ottoman Empire. Due to the shortcomings of medieval sources, they also provide supplementary data for the reconstruction of the medieval settlement network.

In 2014 was launched a project to process the cadastral registers (sanjak surveys, timar defters, daybook-, and poll tax registers) relating to about 30 sanjaks covering the territory of Ottoman Hungary (*A magyarországi hódoltság és hódoltsági peremvidék kataszteri iratainak [tapu-defter] feldolgozása / Processing of the cadastral records [tapu-defter] of the peripheral region Ottoman Hungary*).¹

The primary goal of the project was to make the Turkish registers which had previously only been published sporadically and in mosaics, available online to the researchers. In the course of the works, the topographical identification of the former settlements (market towns, villages and deserts) took place. In 2020, the examination of the administrative units that existed in the southern part of the Danube–Tisza Interfluvium Region, including the area of the historical Bodrog County, was started in cooperation with the Katona József Museum of Kecskemét. Since 2010, the Museum has carried out basic research on Bács-Kiskun County to reconstruct more accurately the medieval settlement network.² Later the area examined

Sudár, Miklós Fóti, Ilona Dorogi, Béla Nagy, Zsolt Záros, László Kollányi, Péter Kollányi, Databases of Cadastral Surveys (Tapu Defteris) of Ottoman Hungary and its Frontier Zones (16–17th c.), *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 37 (2020), 259–272.

² István Pánya, A Solti-szék történeti földrajza, *Történeti Földrajzi Közlemények*, 3–4 (2017), 84–95; István Pánya, Történeti településföldrajzi kutatások Bács-Kiskun megyében 2011–2016, *Településföldrajzi Tanulmányok*, 1 (2017), 91–107; István Pánya, Fejér megye solti székének történeti földrajza, *Alba Regia* 45 (2017), 135–180; István Pánya, Possibilities and Methods for the Reconstruction of the

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¹ Éva Sz. Simon, Klára Hegyi, Gábor Demeter, Balázs

was extended to Pest and Csongrád counties, and to Vojvodina, today part of Serbia. In the present study, the methods used during the topographical investigation of the *nahiyes* of Zombor and Baja will be discussed along with the results obtained.

Literature Review

The processing of Turkish registers began in the 19th century. At that time only the head tax censuses kept in Vienna were known which do not contain the depopulated settlements, wastelands, neither topographical comments, nor individual tax types levied on the settlements. Later on, in the 20th century, the sanjak surveys stored in the Prime Minister's Archives in Istanbul became accessible which provide a more detailed picture of the sample area. Tibor Halasi-Kun was the first, who undertook to examine and transcribe a survey of the sanjak of Szeged (the last one of 1578). Although he was not able to finish his work, his unfinished manuscript is currently in the possession of the Research Centre for the Humanities.³ In several smaller scientific publications he presented the special compounds of settlement names found in the defters of southern Hungary (*dolna-*, *sredna-*, *gorna-*, i.e. lower-, middle-, upper- prefixes; *nezd-i* – near to; *nam-ı diğər* – also known as compounds).⁴ His articles were thought-provoking, based on an in-depth examination of medieval and Turkish sources, however some of his results proved to be wrong. On the northern part of the sanjak of Szeged (the districts of Kalocsa and Szeged) additional data was published by Előd Vass, along with significant shortcomings and misreadings (e.g. Kenyértelek which existed in the area of Kalocsa, proved to be correctly Gyértelek).⁵ It is important to mention the only non-Hungarian

publication on the southern part of the Danube-Tisza Interfluvium Region: Branislav Đurđev and Olga Zirojević published the data of the earliest Ottoman survey of the sanjak of Szeged, however, their work, with few exceptions, has not attempted to topographically identify the Ottoman settlement network or to determine their medieval antecedents.⁶ Subsequently Gyula Káldy-Nagy published the translation of the survey of 1570 covering the entire territory of the sanjak of Szeged.⁷ The author presents in detail the population and economic data of the settlements in 1570, the tax types, and also gives their medieval antecedents. A more in-depth review of the data revealed that he had frequently incorrectly read the names of settlements. Quite often he paired incorrect transcriptions with modern toponyms without any medieval antecedents, thus misleading local historians and researchers, who use his publication without criticism. However, it was Káldy-Nagy's merit to prepare the first complete map of the sanjak showing its administrative divisions, unfortunately along with the topographical misidentifications.

Finally – although it is not related to the Danube-Tisza Interfluvium Region – it is important to mention Pál Engel's article on the sanjaks of Temesvár and Moldova which represents a completely different approach, compared to the above-mentioned defter editions made by Turkologists. His work is much more concise, basically defining the location and medieval name of the vanished settlements based on three surveys.⁸ In terms of our research, Engel's approach inspired us when setting up the methodology. In his book, he did not attempt to transcribe the complete surveys of the period 1554–1579, rather to give a topographical summary of the settlements. He drew attention to the fact that the settlement network of Banat (Hungarian Temesköz), like those of other southern sanjaks, was transformed completely by the disappearance of Hungarian population and by the immigration of various ethnic groups from the Balkans. Some Hungarian place names were only more or less distorted, while others were completely replaced by Slavic or Romanian equivalents. Similar phenomena were also observed

Settlement Structure of Medieval Bodrog Bounty, *Banatica*, 29 (2020), 321–352; István Pány, A Mohácsi-sziget történeti topográfiája, *Történeti Földrajzi Közlemények*, 3–4 (2020), 105–120; István Pány, Bodrog vármegye története, *Történeti Földrajzi Közlemények* 1–2 (2021), 27–43; István Pány, Settlement Forms in the Territory of Medieval Bács and Bodrog County, *Banatica*, 31 (2021), 265–299.

³ The full text of the defter has recently been published. Miklós Fóti, *The Mufasssal Tabrir Defteri of the Sanjak of Szeged (1578)*, Budapest (2023).

⁴ Tibor Halasi-Kun, Unidentified Medieval Settlements in Southern Hungary. Ottoman: *dolna*, *sredna*- and *gorna*, *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 2 (1970), 154–190; Tibor Halasi-Kun, Unidentified Medieval Settlements in Southern Hungary. Ottoman: 'nam-ı diğər', *Studia Turcica*, 213–230; Tibor Halasi-Kun, Unidentified Medieval Settlements in Southern Hungary. Ottoman: *nezd-i* et *socii*, *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 3 (1971), 5–169.

⁵ Előd Vass, A kalocsai náhije 1548. évi török adóösszeírása,

Cumania VI (1979), 7–62; Előd Vass, *Kalocsa környékének török kori adóösszeírásai*, Kalocsa (1980).

⁶ Branislav Đurđev – Olga Zirojević, Opširni defter Segedinskog sandžaka, *Mešovita Grada*, 17–18 (1988), 7–80.

⁷ Káldy-Nagy Gyula, *A szegedi szandzsák települései, lakosai és török birtokosai 1570-ben*, Szeged (2008).

⁸ Pál Engel, *A temesvári és moldovai szandzsák törökkori települései 1554–1579*, Dél-Alföldi évszázadok 8, Szeged (1996).

during our project in the southern part of the Danube-Tisza Interfluve Region.

Engel was an excellent historian but without the skills of an Ottomanist. He believed – after having acquired a basic knowledge on Arabic paleography – that one should not get started from the uncertain and frequently in several ways readable Arabic script. Instead, it is more advisable to set out from the medieval sources of the region. The author emphasized that although the publication of a detailed sanjak survey is the task of an Turkologist but the transliteration and identification of settlement names can be done with some paleographical practice without the knowledge of the Turkish language. This is where the main shortcoming of his work comes from, yet he was the first to draw attention to the importance of comparing the data obtained from the defters with the medieval sources, exactly due to the many misinterpretations of Halasi-Kun and others. Thus, the work of Engel, as well as his map depicting the settlements of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, is indispensable for researchers dealing with the historical geography of the southern part of the Carpathian Basin but his data must be approached with adequate criticism.⁹

The contradictions between the works of different authors can be illustrated by a deserted village in the vicinity of Kalocsa (HU): this wasteland was called Kenyértelék by Előd Vass, then “[?] Telek” by Gyula Káldy-Nagy. Pál Engel was aware of the uncertainty of their readings, thus preferred Halasi-Kun’s interpretation from his unfinished manuscript, and depicted it – incorrectly – as Kenéztelék on his medieval map. The correct reading can be determined from the 1748–1751 census of the Archdiocese of Kalocsa as Gyértelék, even it was depicted on the map of Sámuel Mikovinyi.¹⁰ However, the Arabic script without complementary signs allows all three readings. The correct version can be determined only by using additional Christian sources.

Summarizing our brief review of the literature, it can be said that although there have been numerous editions of Turkish defters related to the southern area of the Kingdom of Hungary, they are all

characterized by numerous methodological errors, misreadings and misinterpretations. Therefore we considered it necessary to take a new approach to the processing of the settlement network of our sample area by combining the knowledge of different fields: geography, local history and Turkology. Another shortcoming of the literature was the failure to draw conclusions and to present general trends in the development of the settlement network, while only dealing with a single defter and not with a series of registers.

Sample Area

The combined extent of the *nahiyes* of Zombor and Baja covers mostly the territory of the early 16th century Bodrog County which was swept away by the Turkish expansion after the Battle of Mohács (1526). Its Hungarian population was replaced by Slavic-Vlach elements of Balkan origin, except for a few settlements mainly near the Danube.¹¹

After the Ottoman occupation of Buda (1541) the *nahiye* of Zombor was established with the centre of Sonbor, formerly known as Czoborszentmihály (today Sombor, SRB). Later, just around 1560, the *nahiye* of Baja was created in the completely depopulated northern area of Bodrog County (Plates 1–2). It is important to point out that the Hungarian population has persisted in the *nahiye* of Zombor only in two former market towns, Küllöd and Szond, additionally a village, Gorna Santova (today Hercegszántó, HU) had a mixture of Slavic–Hungarian population. In the district of Baja a few settlements along the Danube have Hungarian population (Bátmonostor, Szeremle, Kákony, Csanád, HU) but the majority of the *nahiye* is Slavic.

Methods

The cooperation of the National Archives of Hungary and the Research Centre for the Humanities made it possible to collect and investigate all the available tax registers related to the sanjak of Szeged (the *nahiyes* of Solt, Kalocsa, Baja, Vásárhely, Szeged, Szabadka/Subotica, Bács/Bač, Titel, and Zombor/Sombor) which were scattered in different archives all around the world. From a methodological point of view, this is a significant innovation, as defter publications formerly focused on a single defter, and only a limited number of the sources was investigated. The processing of the entire available dataset and the comparison their

⁹ Pál Engel, *Magyarország a középkor végén: digitális térkép és adatbázis*, Budapest (2001).

¹⁰ HU MNL, OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 072. – No. 044; OSZK, TK 1624: *Mappa Danubii cursum, situmque tam ex eo, quam aliis i[n]clityi comit[at]us Pesthiensis partibus, procurrentium alveorum, aquarumque meatuum, ac inde per districtum Solthiensem formatarum lacunarum et paludum, representans*. S[amuel] Mikoviny, 1740.

¹¹ Pányi, *Bodrog* ..., 27.

geographical data provided a number of analytical opportunities. It was possible to observe the changes both in the population and in the settlement network after the Turkish occupation. Hungarian toponyms gradually changed, partly vanished, new Slavic names, unknown in medieval sources, turned up. An important part of the research was a thorough, critical, and philological examination of the Ottoman text which led to many new observations. Particular attention was paid to the various compounds adding topographical information to the settlements, facilitating their identification. The most important data of geographical nature are:

1) The formula *nezd-i* (“...nearby”) with a toponym followed by, reveals the location of a wasteland, belonging to a village or market town. Usually, it indicates immediate proximity but exceptionally more distant wastelands, up to 15–20 km away, may belong to a settlement, only if its lands are unsuitable for cultivation. This is mostly observed at settlements located in the floodplain of the Danube or in areas where the soil is sandy.

2) The formula *nam-ı diğەر* (“also known as”) connects two toponyms, and its meaning can be considered on a case-by-case basis:

a) the medieval Hungarian toponym is usually followed by a Slavic one which emerged only in Ottoman sources (e.g. Nad’ Heteş *nam-ı diğەر* Kupusina, see today’s Bácskertes/Kupusina, SRB).

b) Frequently *nam-ı diğەر* connects two settlements which existed within the same borders (in the case of Keçene *nam-ı diğەر* Bo’an, both Kecskés and Battyán are known in medieval sources. Evidently, the two elements were originally separate settlements.

c) Toponyms which consist of two elements without *nam-ı diğەر*, were probably originally linked by a *nam-ı diğەر* (Varfel Sakova means Varfel *nam-ı diğەر* Sakova: it was created by merging two medieval, neighbouring villages, Valfer and Száka (northwest of Apatin, SRB); Telek Sivaç: its prefix refers to the former market town Telek located once in the proximity of today’s Szivác/Sivac, SRB).

d) In the case of the *nahiye* of Baja which is adjacent to areas inhabited by Hungarian population, both elements can be Hungarian place names (Sented’haz *nam-ı diğەر* Torokhaz, Şagod *nam-ı diğەر* Zöded’haz). The latter clearly illustrates that the population must also be examined. Ságod (north of Sükösd, HU) had exclusively Hungarian inhabitants until 1560 but this rapidly changed: from 1570 there are only Balkan Slavs. However, the name Zödegyház (Green Church) turns up

only in 1570 and 1578, and we cannot assume that the new settlers from the Balkans refer to the deserted church of Ságod, overgrown by vegetation, with a Hungarian descriptive place name. Zödegyház – by the way unknown in the medieval Hungarian sources – could have been a toponym which was adopted by the newcomers. The point is, whether Zödegyház was an alternative name of Ságod, or rather a ruined church in the proximity of Ságod.

e) There are cases where the use of *nam-ı diğەر* is difficult to interpret and it is not clear for what purpose it was used by the Turks. Our previous example, Ságod demonstrated this difficulty. As another example, see Vatova *nam-ı diğەر* Vatov. Its former Hungarian name – Avató – does not appear in any defter, and the aim of linking the two elements is unclear.

To summarise, it can be said that in an area where the settlement network has undergone a massive devastation, many settlements vanished completely, the *nam-ı diğەر* compounds often reveal the alternative Slavic name of a Hungarian toponym. In total, we could count on slightly more than 40 *nam-ı diğەر* in the districts of Zombor and Baja which is a considerably large number.¹² Similarly frequent use we can not observe more north, on the border region of the Ottoman Empire.

3) The tax types of villages can also add information to our topographical knowledge. Sometimes there are fishing places (*dalyan*) listed which are identifiable on 18–19th century maps. For example, the village of Harçan had a fishing place called Popoviç in 1560 and 1570 which is depicted on the maps as piscina Popovicza/Popovicza Bara on the western side of Bácsordas/Karavukova (SRB) where on the Habsburg military survey we find Harkány.

4) In addition, the defters also provide other topographic expressions: *der mukabele-i...* (“opposite to something”), *der mabeyn-i...* (“between [two settlements]”). E.g. *cezire-i* Jiva *der mukabele-i* Dal that means Zsiva island opposite to Dal (Dal is on the Croatian side of the Danube, identical with today’s Dalj). Yanoş Falu *der mabeyn-i* Bortan *ve* Popovçe, means that János Falu is between Bortány and Papi. Another compound proves that Ottoman Popovçe is identical with medieval Papi: Popovaç *nam-ı diğەر* Papi, showing how a set of topographical information can identify a vanished settlement.

¹² For more on *nam-ı diğەر* see: Miklós Fóti-István Pánya, Ottoman *nam-ı diğەر* as a tool for the reconstruction of the settlement network of medieval Bodrog County, *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 39 (2022), 179–190.

5) An arable land shared by several settlements can also help us to locate an unidentified settlement. In 1578 three settlements, Mélkút, Tótház and Árokház paid taxes for an arable land called Szenmiklós Telek. We do not have any medieval data regarding the location of Árokháza. However, the location of Mélkút (today Mélykút, HU) and Tótház (later Tataháza, HU) is known, so we can roughly determine the possible location of Árokháza (and of course of Szenmiklós Telek as well).

6) Even medieval sources contain geographical informations unexploited by our predecessors. Our most important source on medieval Bodrog County are the lists of tithes between 1520–22. Analysing its data, turned out, if a peasant had a garden in another village, or worked as a harvester (*messor in...*) in a settlement other than the one he lived in, then the two were close to each other. Thus, in the case of the unlocalized Geszt, it proved to be a valuable topographical information that in 1522 two of its residents were “*messor in Kajánd*” (*i.e.* harvesters in nearby Kajánd).¹³ We know the exact location of Kajánd from medieval sources (south of present-day Gara, HU), now we can estimate the approximate location of Geszt.

7) Data on road network mentioned in medieval charters can supplement our knowledge on the county. In 1479, a road running from Kengyi to Ordód across Ivánfalva (all three existed west-southwest of Zombor/Sombor, SRB) was mentioned which helped to place the uncertain Ivánfalva between the identified Kengyi and Ordód.¹⁴

The above-mentioned topographic data were collected from the entries of 4 sanjak surveys, 4 poll tax defters, 3 timar defters and dozens of daybook registers, then compared with the medieval data.

In parallel with the in-depth examination of the Ottoman sources, a geospatial database of medieval settlements was completed in the Katona József Museum of Kecskemét, based on ethnographic, geographic, and historical sources, 11–16th century data of charters, as well as the 18–19th century manuscript maps. Of the medieval charters, documents containing border inspection, property

division, and other geographical data, suitable for border reconstruction (~130 pieces), are of particular importance. Other kinds of documents containing various property transactions and disputes on properties were mainly important for tracing the existence and legal status of settlements (inhabited / wasteland, village / market town), as well as the various name variations and name changes. Village sites (*locus possessionis antiqua, seliste*) and church ruins (*rudera templi, locus ecclesiae, klissa, gradina*) marked on manuscript maps made it possible to precisely determine the location of settlements in many cases. In addition, it was possible to identify many border elements known from medieval charters and Ottoman defters (fish pond, forest, mound, etc.). From a topographical point of view, field inspections in the northern part of the *nahiye* of Zombor and in the *nahiye* of Baja, were of particular importance.¹⁵

The final element of the methodology was the connection of data collected from Turkish sources with the geospatial database of the medieval settlements. This involved comparing the medieval and Turkish data, as well as determining the location of the settlements.

Results

The fundamental geographic-historical work of the historian Dezső Csánki knows the names of 12 market towns and 213 settlements in Bodrog County in the Hunyadi era.¹⁶ In comparison, we found traces of about 200 settlements in the *nahiye* of Zombor and Baja in the Turkish registers. There are 81 settlements that existed in medieval Bodrog County but disappeared with the Turkish conquest. In some cases field names, boundary names have preserved the memory of a vanished settlement. In this respect, the survival of place names is purely formal. A good example is Bátoregyháza (west-southwest of today's Katymár, HU) which had been depopulated during the Mongol invasion (1241) and was an uninhabited wasteland (*terra vacua Batureghaza*) even in the middle of the 14th century. Two centuries later, in the Ottoman surveys it was mentioned as the arable land of Katymár and Legyán (today Ólegyen, a wasteland, southwest of Katymár). An important finding which has not yet been stated by researchers, is that medieval Hungarian toponyms are continuously mentioned in the 17th century daybook registers (*timar*

¹³ For the complete census see: MNL OL DL 37163, the census of 1522: István Szabó, *Bács, Bodrog és Csongrád megye dézsmalajstromai 1522-ből*, Budapest (1954), 57–73.

¹⁴ István Pánya, *Úttalan utakon – Adatok a késő középkori Bodrog vármegye úthálózatához*. Varga Szabolcs (ed.), *Mohács tágas mezején. Tanulmányok az 1526. évi csata új kutatási eredményeiből*, Pécs (2021).

¹⁵ Pánya, *Possibilities...*, 321.

¹⁶ Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában II*, Budapest (1894).

ruznamçe defterleri) but disappeared immediately after the expulsion of the Turks at the end of the 17th century. Then, as a result of the large-scale population exchange, a significant part of them fell into complete oblivion immediately, without transition. Thus, in the years before the expulsion of the Ottomans, we still find the names of Szentház, Halmos, Temérdekegyház in the defters, and then they were completely forgotten. Csánki and other historians believed that the Hungarian settlement network had been drastically eradicated after the Battle of Mohács. It has been demonstrated that a significant part of the Hungarian nomenclature dating back to the Middle Ages disappeared just at the end of the Turkish rule.

The distribution of the settlements is not homogeneous: in both examined periods (15th and 16th centuries), the western part of the county, close to the Danube, was the most densely populated, while the eastern areas (Telecska and Homokhátság) were much less populated, even in the Middle Ages. It can also be seen that the destruction was the greatest in the area of Czoborszentmihály/Zombor in the period following the Battle of Mohács where the identification of settlements was the most difficult (Plates 3–4). At the same time, when comparing with Dezső Csánki's data, it should be taken into account that the administrative division during the Turkish period includes several southern settlements historically belonged to Bács County. These were attached by the Ottomans to the *nahiye* of Zombor, the successor of Bodrog County (slightly less than 30 settlements).

At first glance, the settlement network of the Ottoman period seems only slightly smaller in number, than the medieval one but we have to take other factors into account. New place names are created by the adjective *kis* “small” (or Slavic *mala*) (e.g. Kis Szákova, Kis Varjas, Kis Telek, Mala Baracska, etc., a total of 9) which are unknown in the Middle Ages, while we know their eponyms (*i.e.* Száka, Varjas, Telek and Baracska are known). Another category which increases the number of Turkish era settlements is a range of new place names formed by the Slavic adjectives *dolna/gorna/sredna* “lower/upper/middle” (e.g. Szredna Szántova, Gorna- and Dolna Szentpál, Gorna- and Dolna Petrőc). Another examples which are enlarging the Ottoman settlement network: Páka Szele'ös (by the merging of Páka and Szele'ös); Gorna Varjas (formed by migration from Var[j]as[d]); other settlements (Szentpál, Petrőc) split up.

It is important to note that the Slavic adjectives *gorna-*, *dolna-* and *sredna-* are extremely common

in our region to distinguish settlements with identical names. However, they can be interpreted in different ways: either a medieval village was split up into several adjoining parts or the settlements were not neighbours but located in different areas of the same *nahiye*. E.g. the toponym Sári is very common in the medieval Hungarian Kingdom (*sár* “swamp, marsh”). There was three Sári in the *nahiye* of Zombor: Gorna Sára in the northern region adjacent to Szabadka (Subotica, SRB), while Dolna Sárija was located at Doroszló (Doroslovo, SRB), in a southern area that before the Ottoman conquest belonged to Bács County. In an intermediate position we find Szredna Sárija west of Zombor where a marshy land called Passinada is situated.

From a topographical point of view, two major achievements have been made. On the one hand, we performed a mass analysis of historical maps with a GIS system. On the other hand, the locations of the medieval settlements found in this way were examined by remote sensing. By combining these two methods, it was possible to identify the sites of former medieval settlements en masse in a short time and at low costs. After that, we carried out field inspections of the objects (village toft and crofts, ruins, old mills, hills, etc.) which were seen on the maps and aerial/satellite images. The field inspections proved that the phenomena marked on the maps are real, only a few cases were found to be misrepresentations or inaccuracies. Based on the results of the surveys in Hungary, a set of criteria and a pattern catalogue for the analysis of satellite images was prepared which made it possible to analyse the cartographic and satellite imagery of Serbian sites with great efficiency. Of course, it would be worthwhile to carry out field researches together with the Serbian heritage protection institutions on the sites of the settlements found in the areas beyond the border, to create a more accurate picture of their chronology and character. The database created by the GIS investigations could be used to select the locations of such future field researches.

With the intensive exploration of sources, it was possible to establish the correct reading and medieval antecedents of the names of many places that were not identified in the literature. For the toponyms in question, we examined the wider environment of the assumed location and compared the names of the medieval settlements known there with the text of the Ottoman registers. A good example is an unidentified wasteland of Tárnokmonostor (near to today's Csátalja,

HU) which was transcribed as Podolás by Gyula Káldy-Nagy. According to our medieval sources there was no such settlement in the area concerned but we know a village called Nyavalyád. After a closer examination, it turned out that the Arabic text, when the complementary signs are inserted differently as Káldy-Nagy did, reads Navolás, *i.e.* Nyavalyás which is a variant of the medieval Nyavalyád. At the same time, this case disproves Engel's view on the secondary importance of paleographic knowledge. The exclusion of such "phantom names" found in the publications of Halasi-Kun and Káldy-Nagy and determining their correct reading was an important element of the philological side of our work (e.g. Battyán is correctly Legyán; Kékes > Kengyös; Hatosszentgyörgy > Hajósszentgyörgy; Iszlokra > Islova; Baráta > Barka).

The example of Nyavalyád drew our attention to the issue of name variants and to their evolution in the 16th century. Where toponyms appear in medieval sources with suffix *-d*, they are often replaced by *-s* in the Turkish period (Nyavalyád > Nyavalyás, Ordód > Ordas, Varjad > Varjas, Varasd > Varjas, Kengy > Kengyes, Aranyand > Aranyas). The Turkish variants are completely unknown in the charters, while the medieval names are no longer used by the defters.

It can be observed that in many cases, the defters do not preserve the spelling as it was known in the medieval charters but a form pronounced in the local dialect characterised by using *ö* instead of *e* (Gyertyános > Györtyános, Eszter > Esztör, Kertvélyes > Kördivilös, Mesteri > Mestörfalu). The presented examples prove that this dialect was originally characteristic of the landscape. The evolution of the place names and the spread of the "ö" dialect may indicate that local, spoken language forms were recorded by the Turks. Further investigations are necessary to understand the explanation of the phenomenon in a region that has undergone an almost complete population exchange. Place names with "ö" dialect can be found even further south, in the Szerémség (Latin Sylvania / Serbian Srem) where a mixed Hungarian–Slavic population lived in the Middle Ages, and migrated later northwards as a result of Ottoman expansion. The Slavic population with roots in medieval Hungary may have played an essential role in the preservation of Hungarian place names, variants. It is also a common phenomenon that Hungarian toponyms were further modified by the Slavs: Harcsán > Vircsán (region of Gombos/Bogojeva, SRB), Erdőalja > Erdeval or Erdevan (northwestern region of

Zombor/Sombor, SRB), Jákó Falu > Jákó Hvalva (southeast of Szond/Sonta, SRB), Varfel Száka > Vakit Szákova (northwestern region of Apatin, SRB). There is no doubt that the Hungarian place names were not only names used by the Ottoman chancellery but were adopted and transformed by the Slavic settlers, who only later and gradually replaced them with their own names.

Authors of the previous publications on the sanjak of Szeged frequently identified medieval/Ottoman settlements with 19th-century Swabian, Hungarian and Serbian border names. For example, Kamarás, located in the area east of Zombor (SRB), has been associated by historians with a forest called Kamaristye at the Danube River; Mestörfalu was connected with Schulmeister szállás ("schoolmasters farm") at Karavukova. Such popular explanations which derived from modern maps, became refutable by topographical data collected from a range of defters.

Another observation revealed that some South Slavic settlements have no medieval antecedent (Bresztács, Virbofcse, Islova, Izvizsdár, Koranja, Orahova, Lepovács). Such Turkish-era Slavic settlements are not known in the Serbian literature. Most of them disappeared with the expulsion of the Ottomans after 1686, just like the medieval Hungarian names (from our examples only Bresztács was known in the 18th century near to Apatin, and Islova can be preserved strongly distorted in the toponym Sivolje on the northwest side of Zombor). After the expulsion of the Turks and Rákóczi's War of Independence (1703–1711), the landscape suffered a similar devastation as in the decades following the Battle of Mohács. Most of the medieval settlement network and place names were destroyed and erased during this period.

It is a common phenomenon that the village headman (*primikür*) was the eponym of a Slavic settlement. Unlike the centuries-long continuity of Hungarian names, these toponyms are usually short-lived (Bajmok also known as Tovority was kept by only one defter). As an exception Jákófalva, in the southeastern neighborhood of Szond (Sonta, SRB), can be mentioned which was recorded as Jákó Falu also known as Reszánovity in the Ottoman surveys. We see its *primikür* Reszán in the sanjak survey of 1560. The name Reszánovity should be used later also, because we see it on the Habsburg military surveys/manuscript maps as Reszánovity/sylva Reszánovácska. This makes it possible to determine the location of medieval Jákó Falu also.

There are more than a dozen Hungarian place

names in the Ottoman registers without medieval records (Gorna Szentkirály, Gesztön, Bánháza, Kis Paulus, Kis Lőrinc, Harcsán, Csipös, Bajmok [near Csonopla/Čonoplja, SRB, not today's Bajmok, SRB], Szen[t] Tomás, Szentegyház alias Torokház, island of Márton Szabó, Csege, Halmád). This shows that it is not possible to reconstruct the entire settlement network, based on medieval sources alone, as no data has survived on many settlements. While Ottomans systematically surveyed a given area, our medieval sources are incomplete and fragmentary.

After processing the entire set of defters, it was possible to track changes in the toponyms over time. In the initial period of the Ottoman era the place names were still mostly Hungarian, gradually replaced by Slavic names (Nagy Hetes > Kupuszina, Udvard > Iszterbinca). The very first sanjak survey (1546) preserved the Hungarian version of many settlements for the first and last time (e.g. Bodoszló > Budiszava). Turkish names are extremely rare, occurring only in a few cases (Rég > Karga koru “Crow forest”, north of Zombor/Sombor, SRB; Tatárrév > Ocak-i Tatariyye, “Troop of the Tatars”, northwest of Zombor/Sombor, SRB; Tárnokmonostor > Çatal Kilise “forked church”, today east of Csátalja, HU). In the first two examples, the inhabitants of the villages are partly Muslims which explains the Turkish name, while in the latter, the descriptive name refers to the shape of the ruined monastery at Tárnokmonostor (*çatal* “two-pronged, forked”).

In the 17th century detailed surveys were no longer made, however we have a large number of *ruznamçe defters* which list the land holdings of the military personnel. These were produced by copying the defters of the previous century which explains, while Hungarian toponyms are still in use despite of the lack of Hungarians. We can conclude that the place names used by the Slavic inhabitants in the 17th century, were different from those used in the *ruznamçe defters*. At the beginning of the 18th century when Habsburg officials visited and recorded the totally depopulated landscape, they found Slavic names that were unknown in Ottoman sources (Hájszentlőrinc > Szenlőrinc > Godecsovo; Battyán > Botyán > Bezdán; Kisszentkirály > Kis Szenkirál > Dolove; Esztör > Roglaticsa > Upper Roglaticza).

It has been proven that the analysis of the population of the defters can be used to clarify the location of an unidentified settlement. The villages Sári (there are three of them) are listed in the early defters as Sárija or Sára without any

adjective (*gorna-*, *sredna-*, *dolna-*). However, if we compare the names of the serfs in all registers, then it is possible to determine which adjectives was later applied to the villages. It is also worth paying attention to the names of the leaders of the communities: Marko Milit’ (Milić) was the *primikür* (headman) of Varjas (medieval Varasd, northwest of Zombor/Sombor, SRB), later we see his name – again as leader of the community – in a newly established village, Gorna Varjas. Latter has no medieval antecedent, so we can assume that a new settlement was founded north of Varjas (towards the uninhabited Baja region) by the South Slavic settlers. In another case, by comparing the names of the serfs, we observed that a part of the population in Dolna Szántova (medieval Morhátszántó, west of Zombor/Sombor, SRB) later appears in Szredna Szántova which we do not know from medieval sources. In this case, Szredna Szántova could have been created by the migration of the Slavic inhabitants of Dolna Szántova. Both cases explain why a Hungarian toponym (Varjas and Szántó) appears in the registers, inhabited exclusively by Slavs, without any medieval antecedents. The Slavic settlers migrated further north, *i.e.* into less populated areas, taking with them the name of their former village.¹⁷

At one village (Izvizdar) it was proven that its inhabitants may have come from the sanjak of Semendire (Smederevo, SRB) where there was a *nahiye* called Izvird (today the region Zvižd). As the province is a well-known homeland of the seminomadic Vlachs, so the inhabitants of Izvizdar may also be of Vlach origin, along with other Slavic settlements without medieval antecedents.¹⁸

Summary

The evaluation of topographical data collected from medieval and Ottoman sources in a research group differed significantly from previous studies on the historical geography of the area. As a first result, at the beginning of 2022 a concise topographical description of the settlements of the

¹⁷ Miklós Fóti, A zombori náhiye Varjas települései a török defterekben és azok középkori előzményei, *Keletkutatás*, Tavasz (2021), 115–126.

¹⁸ Most of the Slavic names without antecedents from the Ottoman era can be found in a defter publication relating to the Northern Balkans, proving the place of origin of the settlers, Halil İnalçık – Evgeni Radushev – Uğur Altuğ, Ottoman Military and Administrative Order on the Lower Danube during the Time of Mehmed the Conqueror. Pál Fodor (ed.), *The Ottoman Tax Registers of Nicopolis, Vidin, and Braničevo, Text and Index*, Budapest (2018).

nahiye of Zombor and Baja has been published.¹⁹ The research will be continued with the reconstruction of the settlement network of medieval Bács County, using the same methods.

Finally, we would like to point out that it would be important to expand the investigated area to include more southern sanjaks. In the first place, Szerémség (Latin Sylvania, Serbian Srem) which has undergone similar historical processes, or the investigation of Temesköz (lowland areas between

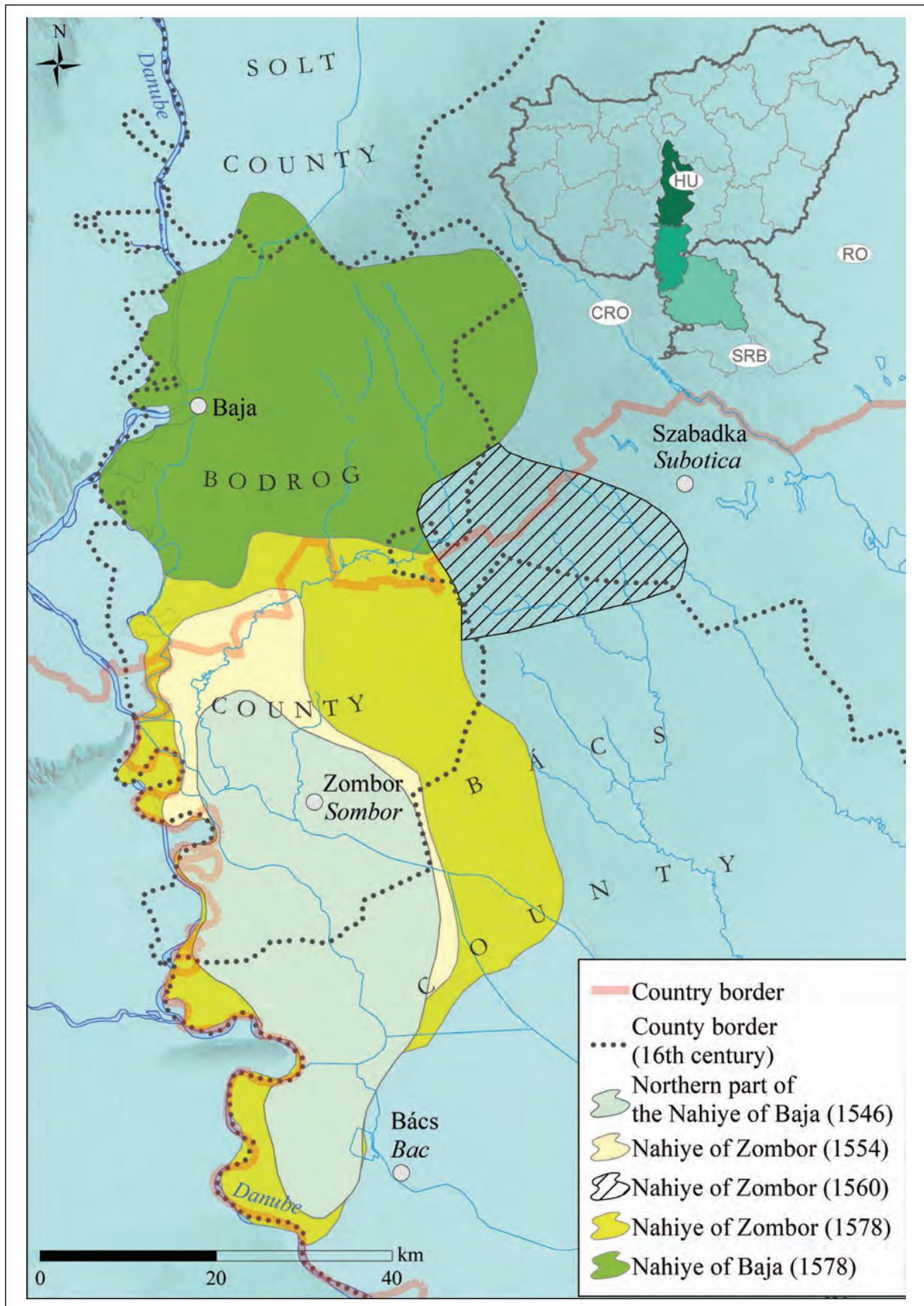
the rivers Maros, Tisza and Danube) can be taken into account which would also contribute to answering the unresolved questions of the sanjak of Szeged. Pál Engel called his publication about the sanjak of Temesvár and Moldova a “rough version”, a first attempt which can only be enhanced by a systematic research work covering all sources.²⁰ We believe that carrying out this work may be of interest to researchers in Romania and Serbia to explore the common legacy of Ottoman past.

ABBREVIATIONS

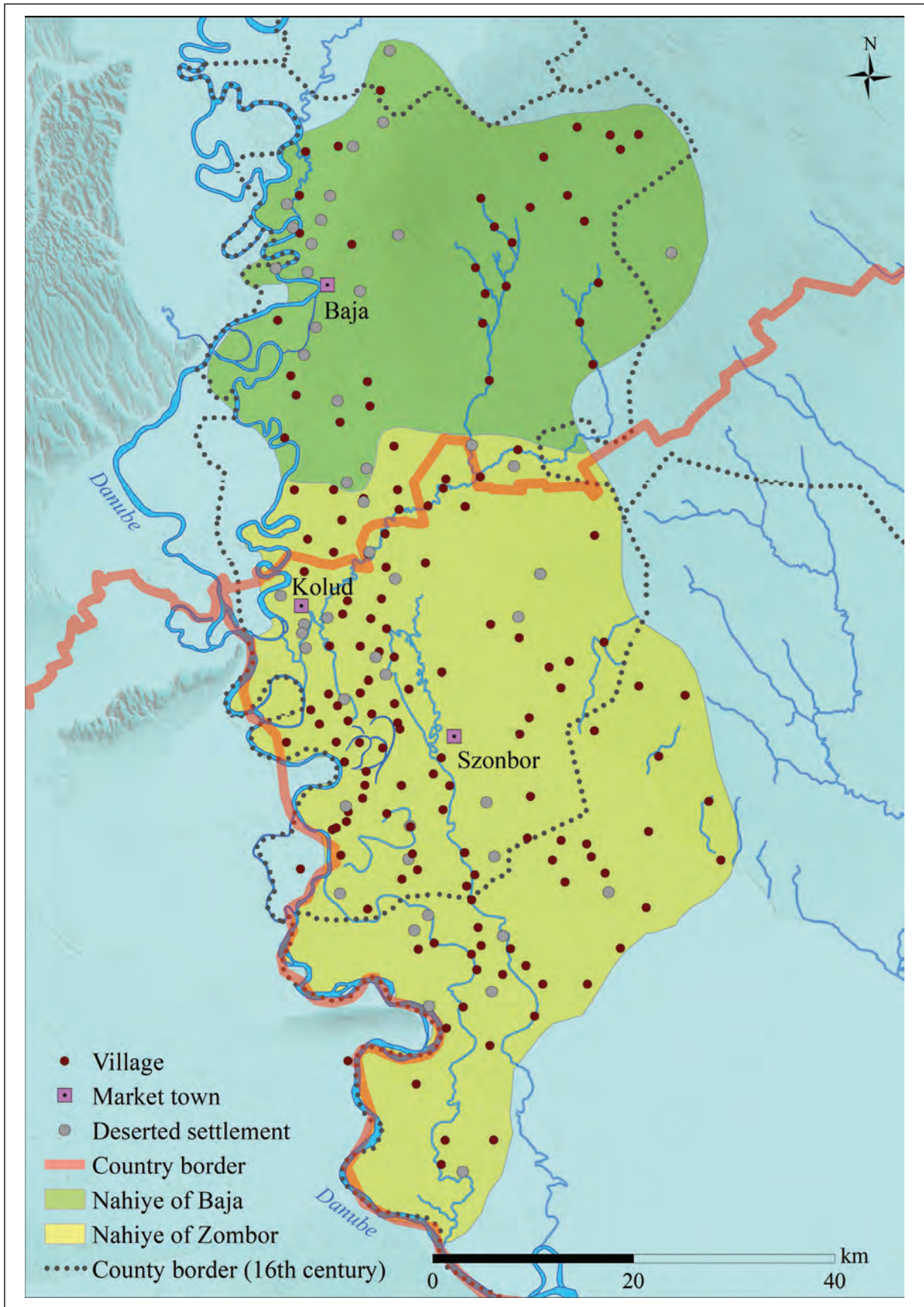
MNL OL DL – National Archives of Hungary
OSZK – National Széchényi Library

¹⁹ Miklós Fóti – István Pánya, *Bodrog vármegye településhálózatának rekonstrukciója a török defterek alapján: A zombori és a bajai nahiye települései 1578-ban*, Budapest (2022).

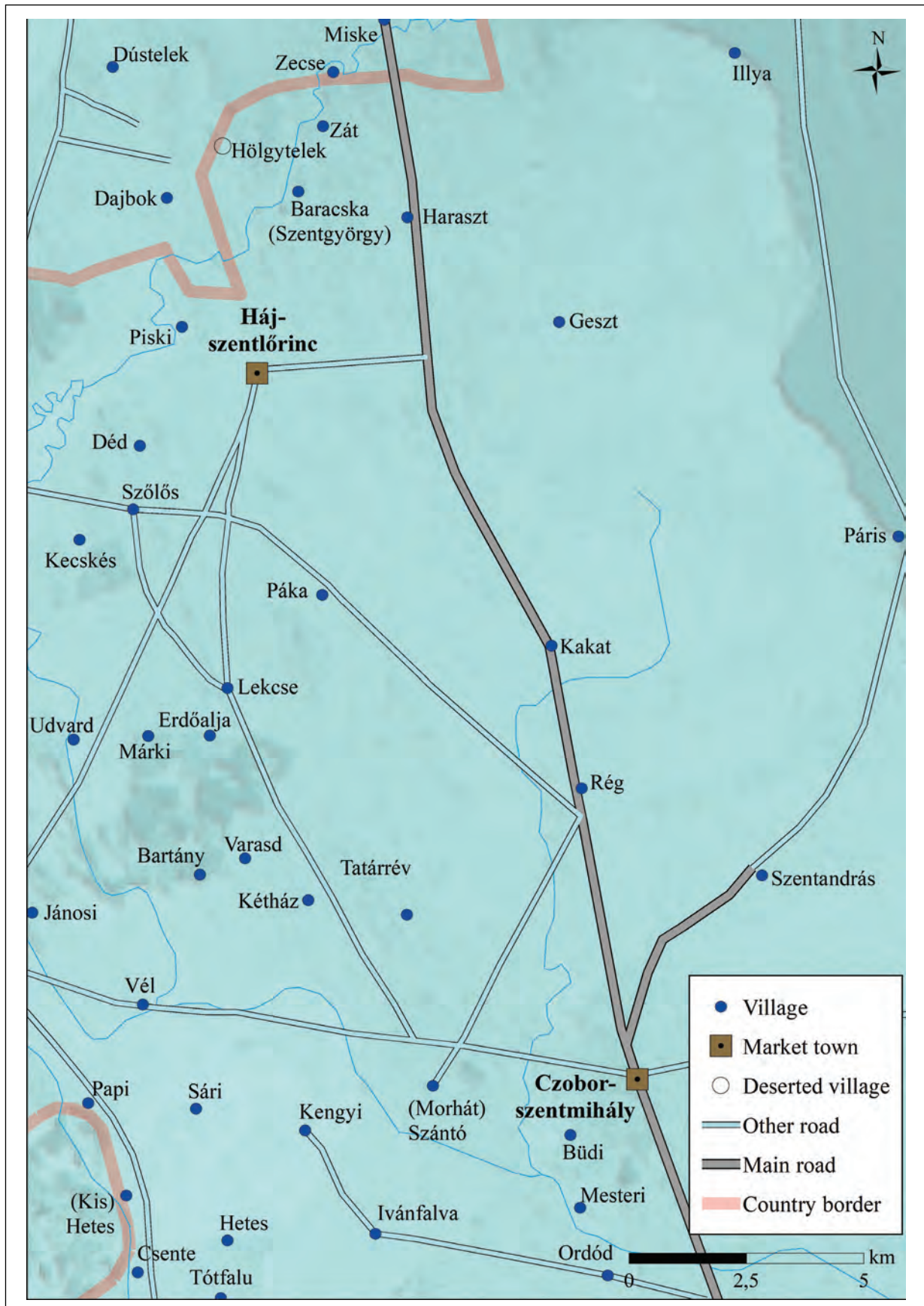
²⁰ Engel, *A temesvári*, 13.



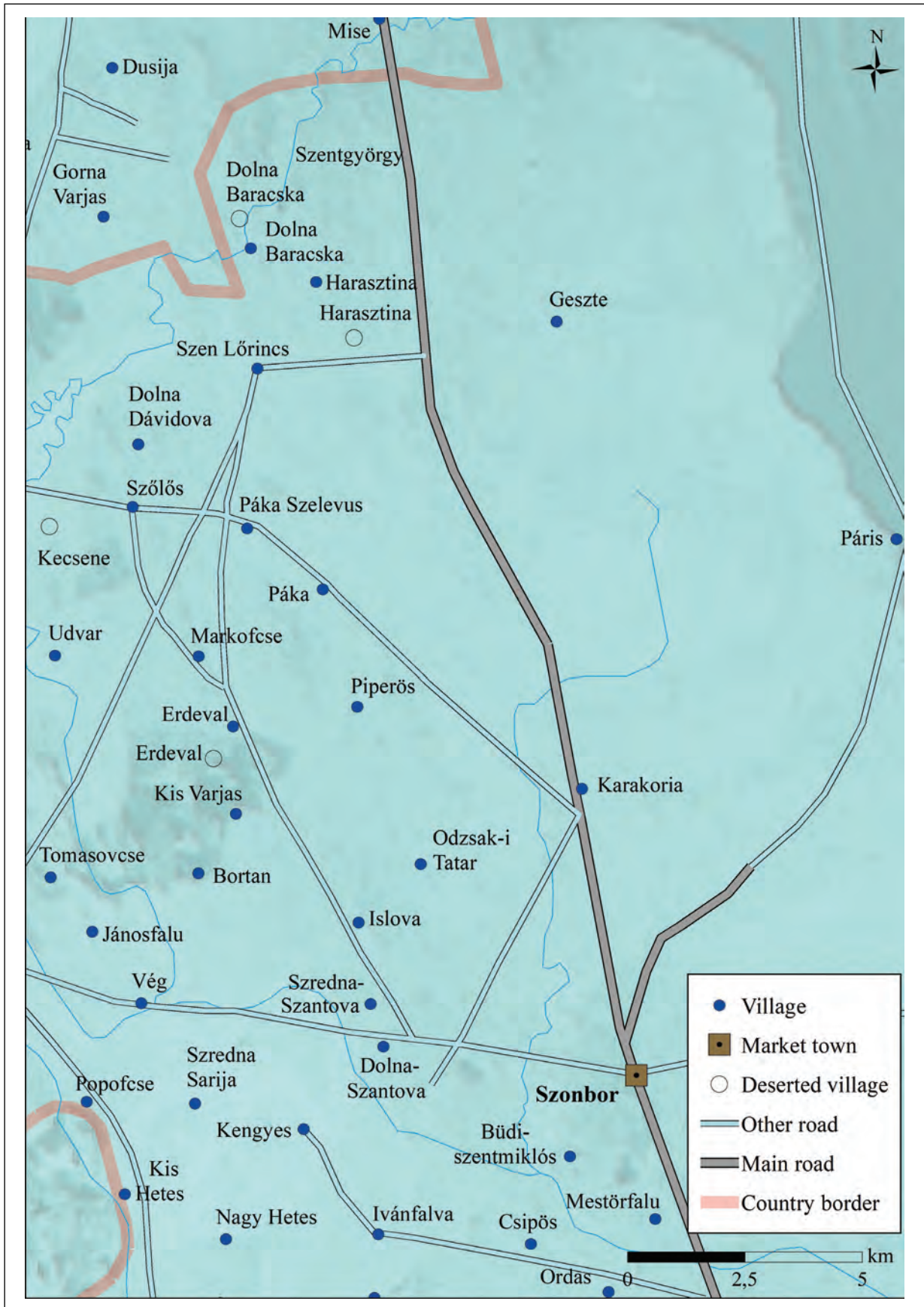
Pl. 1 Changes to the *nahiye* boundaries established in the territory of Bodrog county (1546–1578)



Pl. 2 The territory of the *nahiye* of Baja and Zombor in the second half of the 16th century



Pl. 3 The settlements of the northern neighbourhood of Zombor (Czoborszentmihály) at the beginning of the 16th century



Pl. 4 The settlements of the northern neighbourhood of Zombor (Czoborszentmihály) at the end of the 16th century