

TOWNS AND CENTRAL PLACES IN THE DANUBE-TISZA/TISA-MAROS/MUREŞ REGION IN THE MIDDLE AGES

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I. General features of urban development in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary

The first urban civilization in the Carpathian or Middle Danube Basin was created by the Romans who had occupied this region, with the exception which is now the Great Hungarian Plain, during the first and second centuries A.D.¹ The Roman towns of the provinces of Pannonia and Dacia were swept

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¹ *History of Transylvania* 3 vols. General editor Béla Köpeczi; eds. László Makkai, András Mócsy, Zoltán Szász, Gábor Barta, editor of the English translation Bennett Kovrig, (Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Monographs-Highland Lakes, N.J: Atlantic Research and Publications – New York: Columbia University Press, 2001–2002), vol. 1, From the Beginnings to 1606, 42–132; Klára Póczy, *Pannoniai városok* [The towns of Province Pannonia] (Budapest, 1976); Radu Ardevan, *Viața municipală în Dacia Romană* (Timișoara, 1998). Hungarian and Romanian archaeologists and historians disagree with each other about the fate of the Romanized population of the towns of the provinces of Pannonia and Dacia. While Hungarian scholars deny the survival of the Romanized urban population, and consequently the continuity between the towns of Antiquity and those of the Middle Ages, Romanian scholars emphasize the survival of the Romanized Dacians. Thus they try to create a solid basis for the theory of Daco–Romanian continuity. In my opinion toponyms provide very simply but remarkably convincing evidence on this delicate question. With the exception of Savaria and Sirmium, the Latin names of the towns used in the Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, are not identical. This fact can be interpreted in only one way: the Romanized population either withdrew to Italy or perished during the Great Migrations. Consequently, topographic continuity can only be proved between the Roman towns and those of the Middle Ages in the Carpathian Basin. Cf.

away by the Great Migrations from the fifth to ninth centuries. The Hungarians who arrived in the Middle Danube Basin in the late ninth century and soon occupied the whole of this region, were semi-nomadic people.² Consequently, with the Hungarian Conquest (Hungarian: *Honfoglalás*, German: *Landnahme*) towns did not emerge automatically here.

Towns came into being as a result of a long social and economic development only after the establishment of the Hungarian state, which, in a symbolic sense, emerged with the coronation of the first Hungarian king, Saint Stephen on 1 January 1001. Medieval Hungarian towns, just like European towns, had two main characteristic features: first they combined the functions of a stronghold and that of an economic, mainly trading centre, and secondly, they enjoyed wide ranging autonomy. The latter meant that they had the right to elect their own magistrates, including the mayor and the aldermen – to use the English terms –, who were responsible for the management of the economic and administrative affairs of the town. Hungarian towns, however, had some very special features. In this respect it should be stressed that only a few dozens of them were fortified with stone walls in the later Middle Ages, and, some of them, enjoyed a wider range of self government than their western counterparts. This is proved by the fact that they had not only the right of electing the headman of the town who was named in Latin *iudex* (Hungarian: *bíró*, German: *Richter*), i.e. judge, and who was empowered by royal privilege with the right of administering justice, but they also had the right to elect their own parish priest.³ Moreover, *hospites*, i.e. foreign guests played a great role in the development of Hungarian towns.

In the history of Hungarian urban settlements two special stages can be distinguished: one period, that preceded, and the other, that followed the beginning of the thirteenth century. Urban-type settlements in Hungary functioned as important economic centres already before the beginning of the thirteenth century, but they did not enjoy real legal autonomy, and, from the topographic point of view, most of them were made up of two components the *castrum* and

István Petrovics, "Royal residences and urban development during the reign of the Anjou kings in Hungary," *Historia Urbana* V, nr. 1 (1997): 39–40.

² The Hungarian Conquest, i.e. the occupation of the Carpathian or Middle Danube Basin by the Hungarians, took place between 895 and 907 A. D. Gyula Kristó, *Hungarian history in the ninth century* (Szeged, 1996), 175–203.; Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary, 895–1526* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2001), 8–27.

³ András Kubinyi, "Városi szervezetek a középkori Magyarországon," [Urban organizations in medieval Hungary] *Honismeret* 21, no. 6 (1993): 16–17; András Kubinyi, "A középkori Magyarország városfejlődése," [The Urban development of Medieval Hungary] *Rubicon* 4, nos. 8–9 (1993): 17. See also István Petrovics, "Foreign Ethnic Groups and Urban Development in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary: the Cases of Temesvár/Timișoara and Szeged," *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio-Umane „Gheorghe Șincai”* Tîrgu Mureș XII (2009): 199–200.

the *suburbium*, or had a spatially divided structure, where craftsmen, merchants and administration were not placed in a closed territorial unit, but in smaller separate settlements. This is why these localities are referred to in recent scholarly literature as *pre-urban* or *proto-urban towns*. Among them were royal seats: Esztergom, Fehérvár, Óbuda, sees of archbishoprics and bishoprics: Esztergom, Kalocsa, Pécs, Eger, Csanád (today Cenad, Romania), Várad (today Oradea, Romania) etc., and comital castles: Csongrád, Bács (today Bač, Serbia) Vasvár etc. where the royal officials of the counties (the *comites*) had their seats.⁴

The thirteenth century, primarily the years following the Mongol invasion of 1241/2, brought several serious changes in the socio-political and economic life of the kingdom. This is the time when the elements of money economy⁵ emerged in Hungary, and the realm, parallel with the decline of the trading contacts with Kiev and Constantinople, became an integral part of the western European economy. Links tying Hungary to Germany and Italy had become ever closer. These fundamental socio-economic changes, together with the royal grants of urban charters, brought about the emergence of “real towns” in great numbers in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary.⁶

It is evident, that even pre-urban towns frequently had *hospes* communities, but the number of foreign guests only increased significantly after the Mongol Invasion. The *hospites* were partly Romance speaking people, to whom the Hungarian sources in the Latin language referred to as *Latini*, *Gallici* and *Italici*. They were followed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by Germans (*Teutonici* and *Saxones*). In contrast with the Latin guests, the immigration of the Germans, in the long run, turned out to be much more significant and from the second part of the thirteenth century German ascendancy became obvious in most of the towns of the Hungarian Kingdom.⁷

⁴ Erik Fügedi: “Középkori magyar városprivilegiumok,” [Medieval Hungarian urban privileges] and Erik Fügedi, “Városok kialakulása Magyarországon” [The making of towns in Hungary], in Erik Fügedi, *Kolduló barátok, polgárok, nemesek* [Mendicant friars, burghers, nobles] (Budapest, 1981), 238–335; László Gerevich, ed., *Towns in medieval Hungary* (Budapest, 1990); András Kubinyi, “A magyar várostörténet első fejezete,” [The first chapter of the history of towns in Hungary], in Csaba Fazekas, ed., *Társadalomtörténeti Tanulmányok: Studia Miskolcinsia*, vol. 2 (Miskolc, 1996), 36–46.

⁵ Money economy is a system or stage of economic life in which money replaces barter in the exchange of goods.

⁶ Jenő Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok* [The last kings of the Árpád dynasty] (Budapest, 1993), 223–41; Katalin Szende, “Was there a bourgeoisie in medieval Hungary?,” in Balázs Nagy and Marcell Sebők, eds., ... *The Man of Many Devices, Who Wandered Full Many Ways... Festschrift in Honor of János M. Bak* (Budapest, 1999), 446; Engel, *The realm of St Stephen*, 111–113.

⁷ For further details see Erik Fügedi: “A befogadó: a középkori magyar királyság,” [Medieval Hungary as a welcoming kingdom], in Fügedi, *Kolduló barátok*, 398–418; György Györffy, “A

From the thirteenth century onwards the term *hospes* primarily referred not to foreign immigrants, but to such persons who during the process of colonization had acquired a special legal status, but were not necessarily of foreign origin. This fundamental change meant that anybody enjoying that special legal status – regardless of ethnic origins – could be referred to as a *hospes*. Thus, in addition to the Latins and the Germans, Hungarians, Armenians and Slavic people were also among the *hospites*. The dominant impact of guests in the evolution of the burghesses is demonstrated, among others, by the fact that the most commonly used phrase of the charters referring to burghers was: *cives et hospites*.

It is also a sign of changes that conscious royal policy aiming at fostering urban development in Hungary dates from the 1230s. It was King Béla IV (1235–1270) who issued the first charters securing urban privileges to localities in Hungary: Fehérvár: 1237, Nagyszombat (today Trnava, Slovakia): 1238. The consequences of the Mongol invasion accelerated this royal policy, as a result of which the number of real towns, that is settlements which enjoyed wide-ranging legal autonomy, increased significantly. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries some 50 settlements were granted royal charter in Hungary. This number refers, on the one hand, only to those localities which were situated in Hungary proper, that is north of the River Drava (in other words Dalmatian and Slavonian towns are not included in this number), and, on the other hand, which were not ecclesiastical centres (“archi/episcopal towns”).⁸

székesfehérvári latinok betelepülésének kérdése,” [The settling of Latin guests in Székesfehérvár], in *Székesfehérvár évszázadai* [Centuries of Székesfehérvár], vol. 2 (Székesfehérvár, 1972), 37–44; András Kubinyi, “Zur frage der deutschen Siedlungen im mittleren Teil des Königreichs Ungarn (1200–1541),” *Vorträge und Forschungen*, Bd. XVIII (1975): 527–66; György Székely, “A székesfehérvári latinok és vallonok a középkori Magyarországon,” [The Latins and Walloons of Székesfehérvár in medieval Hungary], in *Székesfehérvár évszázadai* [Centuries of Székesfehérvár], vol. 2, (Székesfehérvár, 1972), 45–72; István Petrovics, “A korai magyar városfejlődés és az idegen jog,” [Early Hungarian urban development and foreign law], in *Régi és új peregrináció, magyarok külföldön, külföldiek Magyarországon* [Old and new peregrination, Hungarians abroad, foreigners in Hungary]. Papers of the Third International Congress on Hungarian Studies, (Szeged, 1993), 267–271; *Korai magyar történeti lexikon (9–14. század)* [Early Hungarian historical lexicon. Ninth to fourteenth centuries], ed. in chief Gyula Kristó, eds Ferenc Makk and Pál Engel (Budapest, 1994) (henceforth *KMTL*), entries: ‘vallonok’, ‘olaszok’, ‘németek’; István Petrovics, “The fading glory of a former royal seat: the case of medieval Temesvár,” in Nagy and Sebők, ... *The Man of Many Devices*, 527–528. Engel, *The realm of St Stephen*, 69; István Petrovics: “Foreign ethnic groups in the towns of Southern Hungary in the Middle Ages,” in Derek Keene, Balázs Nagy and Katalin Szende, eds, *Segregation-Integration-Assimilation. Religious and Ethnic Groups in the Medieval Towns of Central and Eastern Europe*, Historical Urban Studies Series (Ashgate, 2009), 67–88.

⁸ Fügedi, *Középkori magyar városprivilegiumok*, 238–310; Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok*, 50–61,

of the above facts not surprising, that within this semicircle in the southern part of Transdanubia, on the Great Hungarian Plain, and in the Temes region, towns can hardly be found.⁹ There are only two localities in this area which were towns of outstanding importance: Szeged and Pécs, the latter being, in fact, an *episcopal* seat.

The urban network of fifteenth century Hungary was constituted, above all, by 30 localities which were regarded as royal free towns. Among them were the mining towns of Selmec-, Körmöc-, Besztercebánya, Új-, Baka-, Béla-, Libetbánya (present-day Banská Štiavnica, Kremnica, Banská Bystrica, Nová Baňa, Pukanec, Banská Belá, Ľubietová – all in Slovakia), and Nagybánya (present-day Baia Mare, Romania), and the towns of the Transylvanian Saxons: Nagyszeben, Brassó, Beszterce, Medgyes, Szászsebes, Szászváros, Segesvár (present-day Sibiu, Braşov, Bistriţa, Mediaş, Oraştie, Sebeş, Sighişoara – all in Romania). However, the most illustrious group of the royal free towns was formed by the so called free royal or tavernical towns, represented by the 8 walled localities that came under the jurisdiction of the tavernical bench, headed by the *magister tavernicorum*: Buda, Sopron, Pozsony/Bratislava, Nagyszombat/Trnava, Kassa, Bártfa, Eperjes (present-day Košice, Bardejov, Prešov – all in Slovakia). Pest, the eighth town, due to its rapid development, joined this group, in all probability, in 1481, *i.e.* during King Matthias' reign. Another group was formed by those towns which could appeal to the court of the *personalis*, *i.e.* to the *sedes personalita*: Esztergom, Székesfehérvár, Szeged and Lőcse, Szakolca, Kisszeben (present-day Levoča, Skalica, Sabinov – all in Slovakia). And last, but not least, the royal town of Zágráb/Zagreb on Mount Gradec or Grič (Latin: Mons Graecensis, Hungarian: Gréc) also belonged to the group of royal free towns.

Besides the ones mentioned above, there were many other towns in the realm, but these had already passed under private lordship, their inhabitants were not, therefore, considered free burghers. Some of these towns were fortified, as were Kőszeg, Kismarton, Szalónak (present-day Eisenstadt and Stadtschlaining, Austria), Trenčsén, Beckó, Kézsmárk (present-day Trenčín, Beckov, Kežmarok – all in Slovakia), Siklós, or episcopal towns, therefore they were referred to as *civitates*, though, in fact, they were not free towns. However, the overwhelming majority of the towns belonged to the category of *oppida*, *i.e.* they were unwalled localities and were subject to seigneurial jurisdiction. Some of them were under the seigneurie of the king: Komárom (present-day Komárno, Slovakia), Tata, Nagymaros, or the queen: Óbuda, Ráckeve, Miskolc, Beregszász (present-day Berehove, Ukraine), and the 5 towns of the Máramaros/

⁹ Petrovics, *The fading glory*, 529; Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 244–266.

Maramureş salt-region (divided today between Romania and Ukraine), others were subjected to secular or ecclesiastical lords.¹⁰

The most important conclusion that can be drawn from the facts presented above is that the town in the legal sense of the word should not be confused with the more general idea of the town as a commercial centre or as a central place. Until quite recently Hungarian historians worked under the influence of István (Stephen) Werbőczy who codified Hungarian customary law in the early sixteenth century.¹¹ Werbőczy put down in his famous work, *The Tripartitum*: “A city in fact is a great number of houses and streets, necessary walls and fortifications, privileged for a good and honest life”.¹² By stating this, Werbőczy became the ideological “father” of those scholars who later followed the legally defined concept of the medieval town.

Nevertheless, in the second half of the 20th century Hungarian historians have thrown off the last vestiges of legal and institutional definitions, so there is a general acceptance now that the town of the Middle Ages was a centre primarily of non-agricultural economic activities, characterized by a diversity of occupations, especially those involved in trade and industry, located in a permanent settlement of larger size and high density. Thus the social and economic life of the town has been recognized as its defining characteristic. In addition to the above mentioned features, English, German and French scholars, mostly historians, archaeologists and urban historical geographers, listed other very significant criteria as well: defences, a planned street-system, a role as a central place, a mint, plots and houses of urban types, complex religious organisation, a judicial centre etc.¹³

Unfortunately, in the case of medieval Hungarian towns many of these

¹⁰ Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 253–255, 262–264; András Kubinyi, “„Szabad királyi város” – „királyi szabad város”? [Free royal town – royal free town], *Urbs. Magyar Várostörténeti Évkönyv* I (2006): 51–61; István Petrovics, “Urban development during the reign of King Matthias: the cases of Szeged and Debrecen,” in Attila Bárány and Attila Györkös, eds, *Matthias and his legacy. Cultural and political encounters between East and West* (Debrecen, 2009), 215–216; László Szabolcs Gulyás, *Városfejlődés a középkori Máramarosban* [Urban development in medieval Maramureş], *Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek* 280 (Kolozsvár, 2014).

¹¹ “Est autem civitas, domorum et vicorum pluralitas, moeniis, et praesidiis circumcincta necessariis, ad bene, honesteque vivendum privilegiata,” in *The Customary Law of the Renowned Kingdom of Hungary: A Work in Three Parts. Rendered by Stephen Werbőczy. (The Tripartitum)*. The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary, vol. 5, Edited and translated by János M. Bak, Péter Banyó and Martyn Rady (Idyllwild CA: Charles Schlacks Jr. Publisher – Budapest: Central European University, 2005).

¹² *The Customary Law*, 388–389.

¹³ For a good summary of the question see: Richard Hodges, *Dark Age Economics. The origins of towns and trade AD 600–1000* (Duckworth, 1989²), 20–25.

criteria are missing. Consequently, a special method was required in Hungary, with the help of which urban type settlements could be defined and ranked. At first, following certain western European models¹⁴, scholars have focused only on one single criterion. Consequently, they have arrived at incorrect conclusions. Thus, it soon became evident, that a complex method is necessary when classifying urban and quasi-urban localities in Hungary, and when one seeks to determine how urbanised a certain settlement was. For this purpose the theory of central places seemed to be applicable. The theory of central places was developed by Walter Christaller in the 1930s in South Germany. It took, however, quite a long time before this aspect of urban functional relations and the inter-urban system were also investigated for different historic periods. Scholars, mostly historians, focussed initially on trade and marketing as major central functions, but later other aspects (social, political, judicial and cultural etc.) also became significant.

Despite many difficulties, András Kubinyi managed to make the concept of central places fit medieval Hungarian circumstances, and with the help of his research results it can easily be established how urbanised a certain settlement was. Kubinyi introduced certain 'bundles of criteria' into the discussion. Taking into consideration the special features of medieval Hungarian urbanisation, as well as, the peculiarities of the Hungarian written source material, he set up 10 categories for the investigation of major central functions. Within these categories Kubinyi scrutinized the following factors: local and central administrative functions, including both royal and noble residences; judicial functions, including the activity of places of authentications; monetary administration; ecclesiastical administration; church institutions, both monasteries of monastic orders (including chapterhouses) and convents of mendicant orders; number of students attending foreign universities, mostly those of Vienna and Cracow, between 1440 and 1514; number of craft and merchant guilds; the position of the locality as a traffic junction (staple right included); the number and frequency of weekly markets and annual fairs; the legal position of a certain locality, including terminology (*civitas*, *oppidum*, *civitas seu oppidum*) referring to the settlement. All these data can be quantified, therefore they give an objective picture about the different settlements. A certain locality could gain maximum 6 central place points in each category, and 10 times 6, *i.e.* altogether 60 points in Kubinyi's system.¹⁵

¹⁴ Erik Fügedi, for instance, adapted Le Goff's method to Hungarian circumstances. Let it suffice here to mention briefly that Le Goff assumed that the more mendicant convents a town had, the more developed it was.

¹⁵ András Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat a középkori Alföldön és az Alföld szélén* [Urban development and the network of markets on the Great Hungarian Plain and on its fringes in the

According to Kubinyi's estimation there were altogether 1200 central places in fifteenth century Hungary, of which only 180 to 200 can be regarded as urban type localities. However, the overwhelming majority of these places, approximately 150 settlements can be regarded as towns only in the economic sense of the world. To put it another way: medieval Hungarian central places can be ranked into eight categories¹⁶, of which only the localities belonging to the first four categories, and possessing minimum 16 central place points, can be regarded – functionally – as towns. In order to demonstrate Kubinyi's research results, we are going to mention a few examples for these categories. The numbers in brackets after the name of the individual towns are the numbers of the maximum 60 points that a locality could gain as a central place on Kubinyi's scale:

Category I: Towns of primary importance (41–60 central place points):

Buda (55); Pozsony/Bratislava (49); Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca (45); Kassa/Košice (43); Székesfehérvár (43); Szeged (42); Pest (41); Sopron (41); Várad/Oradea (41)

Category II: Towns of secondary importance (31–40 central palace points):

Pécs (39); Esztergom (38); Bártfa/Bardejov (33), Eperjes/Prešov (32), Temesvár/Timișoara (33)

Category III: Towns of minor importance and market towns (*oppida*) with major urban functions (21–30 central place points):

Nagybánya/Baia Mare (29); Lippa/Lipova (28); Debrecen (28); Csanád/Cenad (27), Kismarton/Eisenstadt (22)

Category IV: Market towns (*oppida*) with medium urban functions (16–20 central place points):

Kőszeg (19); Visegrád (17); Kisszeben/Sabinov (16)

Middle Ages] (Szeged, 2000) 7–94; András Kubinyi, "Városhálózat a késő középkori Kárpát-medencében," [The network of towns in the Carpathian Basin in the Late Middle Ages], in Enikő Csukovits and Tünde Lengyel, eds, *Bártfától Pozsonyig. Városok a 13–17. században* [From Bártfa/Bardejov as far as Pozsony/Prešporok (Bratislava). Towns in the thirteenth–seventeenth centuries] (Budapest, 2005), 17–31. See also Szende, "Was there a bourgeoisie," 446–448.

¹⁶ Kubinyi determined these categories on the basis of a 16th-century Polish classification of towns. Category VIII in Kubinyi's system is reserved for those localities about which only incomplete data are known and therefore they cannot be associated with any of the seven categories set up by him. Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat*, 15–16, 95.

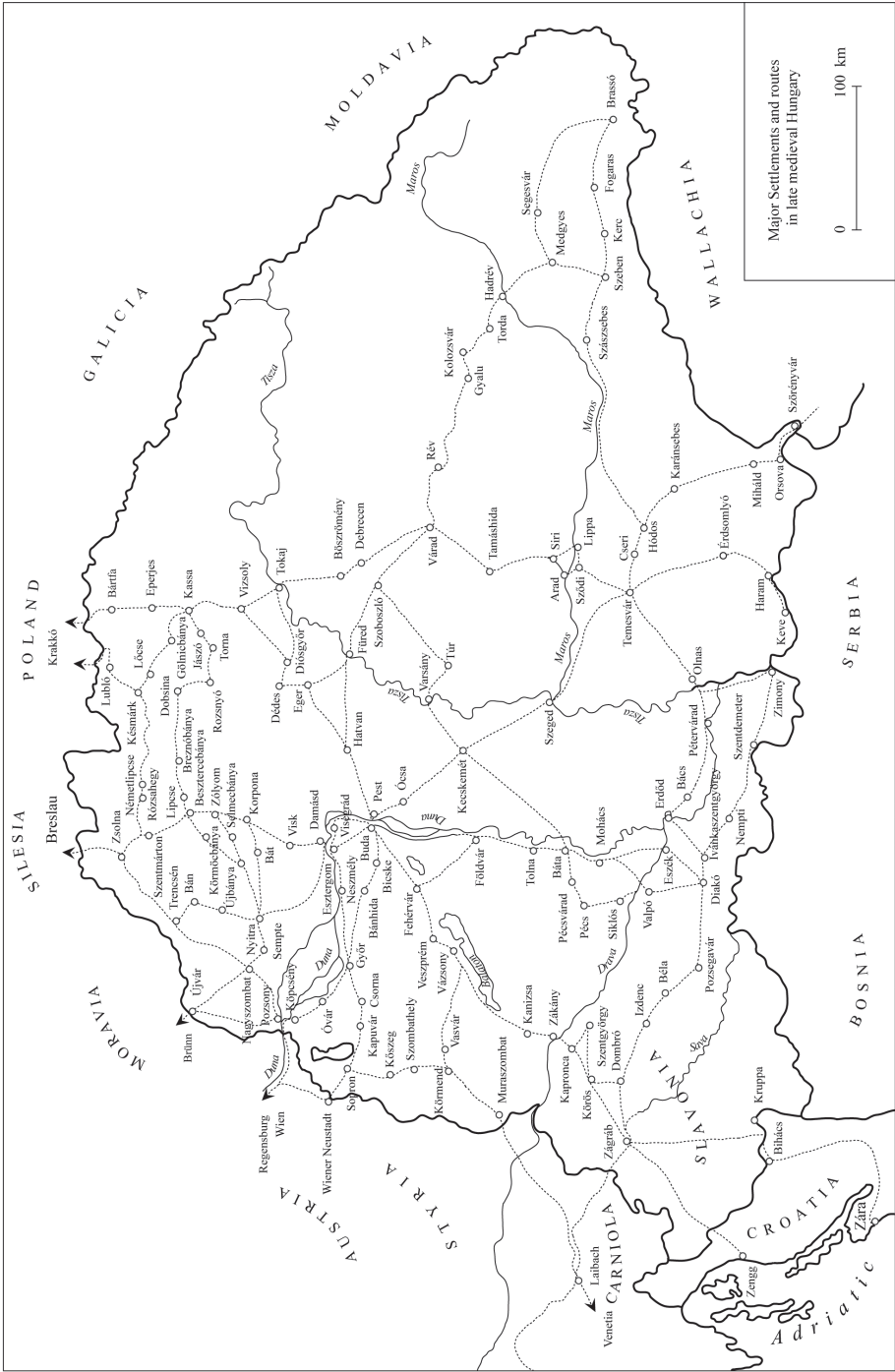


Figure 1. Major settlements and trade routes in late medieval Hungary

After KMTL p. 95. Early Hungarian Historical Lexicon, Bp. 1994.

Category V: Market towns (*oppida*) with partial urban functions (11–15 central place points):

Keve/Kovin (14), Lugos/Lugoj (12), Orsova/Orşova (11)

Category VI: Ordinary market towns (*oppida*) and villages with market town character (6–10 central place points):

Szódi/Frumușeni (10), Illyéd/Ilidia (9), Rékas/Recaș (7)

Category VII: Insignificant market towns (*oppida*) and villages with central functions (1–5 central place points)¹⁷:

Mácsalaka/Maşloc (4), Perjámos/Periam (3), Berekszó/Beregsău (4)

II. Urban Development in the Region between the the Rivers Danube, Tisa and Mureș (Hungarian: Duna–Tisza–Maros köz) in the Middle Ages

The Region

After this short survey of the history of towns and cities in medieval Hungary, it is possible now to proceed to the case of the towns and central places of the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureș Region.¹⁸ The area in question,

¹⁷ Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat*, 59–101; Kubinyi, “Városhálózat a késő középkori Kárpát-medencében,” 30. See also Petrovics: *Urban development during the reign of King Matthias*, 216–217.

¹⁸ After the expulsion of the Ottoman Turks between 1716 and 1718 the region bordered by the south-eastern part of the Great Hungarian Plain (Nagy Alföld), the rivers Maros/Mureș, Tisza/Tisa and Al-Duna (the Lower-Danube) and historic Transylvania was organised by the Viennese Court into a border/buffer zone with the name *banatus Temesiensis/Temesvariensis* (*Temescher/Temesvarer Banat*, i.e. *Temesi bánság* in Hungarian). From the early 18th century on, the region was frequently referred to as *Bánság* or *Bánát* in Hungarian, or *Banat* in German, Serbian and Romanian, clearly from the German word *Banat* (*banate* in English). However, it is important to stress that the terms *Bánság/Bánát* and *banatus Temesiensis* (*banate of Temes*) were not used in the Middle Ages, for the simple reason that this political and administrative formation was created only in the early 18th century. Consequently, it is much more correct to use another term when referring to this area. This could be the Region between the rivers Danube, Tisa and Mureș (Hungarian: *Duna-Tisza-Maros köz*). In contrast with the term *Bánság* (*Bánát*), the designation *Temesköz* is to be found in mediaeval documents. This name appears first in the papal tithe lists from the years 1332–1337. However, it should be borne in mind that the term *Temesköz* refers only to the smaller, flatland part of the region that was later called Banat. *Temesköz* is a compound Hungarian word: the first element is identical with the name of the River *Temes*, while the second element, i.e. *köz*, has a special meaning in Hungarian, referring to an area bordered by waters/rivers. Medieval documents demonstrate that the term *Temesköz*

in all probability, came under the rule of the first Hungarian king, Saint Stephen, in 1028, when the king's military leader, Csanád subdued Ajtony, then lord of this region.¹⁹ This change of rule allowed the spread of Latin Christianity in the region that had previously belonged to Ajtony and which, through his person, had had contacts with the Greek Orthodox Church. It also permitted the introduction of the county system here, which had a past of several decades in the western part of the Middle Danube-Basin. Around Marosvár (or Csanádvár, as it was named from this time on), a bishopric (*diocesis*) was organised, whose borders coincided with those of the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/ Mureş Region. Certain territories to the north of the River Maros/Mureş also belonged to the bishopric of Csanád (*diocesis Chanadiensis*) since the *archidiaconatus ultramorisensis* and a part of the *archidiaconatus Orodiensis* were also included in the bishopric of Csanád. Saint Gerard (Gellért), an Italian murdered by the mob during the pagan uprising in 1046, became the first bishop of Csanád in 1030. As concerns the secular administration, it seems very probable that originally one huge county, the county of Csanád, was organised on the former territory of Ajtony, and this coincided in size with the bishopric of Csanád. However, this immense county eventually broke up into several smaller counties, in all probability in the twelfth century. The county of Keve/ Kovin became independent first, followed (in parallel with the expansion of the state system

was used merely as a geographical designation. István Petrovics, "Urban development in the Danube-Tisa-Mureş Region in the Middle Ages," *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie–Istorie IX (2002): 390–394; István Petrovics, *A középkori Temesvár. Fejezetek a Bega-parti város 1552 előtti történetéből* [Medieval Temesvár. Chapters from the history of Temesvár prior to 1552], *Capitulum IV* (Szeged, 2008), 21–25. For the medieval history of the "Banat" from the Serbian perspective see Aleksandar Krstić, "Banat u srednjem veku," in Miodrag Maticki and Vidojko Jović, eds, *Banat kroz vekove. Slojevi kultura Banata* (Beograd, 2010), 65–90. For the mountainous part of the Danube-Tisa-Mureş Region see Dumitru Țicu, *Banatul montan în Evul Mediu*, (Timișoara: Editura Banatica, 1998).

¹⁹ Gyula Kristó, "Ajtony and Vidin," *Studia Turco-Hungarica V* (Budapest, 1981): 129–135; István Petrovics, "Szent István államszervezése," [The state organizing activity of Saint Stephen], in Gyula Kristó ed., *Az államalapító* [The Founder of the State] (Budapest, 1988), 78–83; László Szegfű, *Ajtony, Csanád*, in KMTL 32–33, 145. It should be noted here that Romanian and Hungarian historians disagree with each other about the descent of Ajtony/Ahtum and the nature of the rule he exercised in the Danube-Tisza/Tisa-Maros/Mureş Region. See. e.g. Alexandru Madgearu, "Salt Trade and Warfare: The Rise of Romanian-Slavic Military Organization in Early Medieval Transylvania," in Florin Curta, ed., *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Early Middle Ages* (The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 103–120; Tudor Sălăgean, "Political entities in Banat and Transylvania Around the Year 1000. Ahtum (Ohtum) and Geula's Duchies," in Ion-Aurel Pop and Ioan Pop, eds, *History of Romania. Compendium*, (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Cultural Institute. Center for Transylvanian Studies, 2006), 148–151.; Kristó, "Ajtony and Vidin,"; Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 42.

towards the south and the east) by the counties of Arad, Temes/Timiş, Krassó/ Caraş and finally Torontál/Torontal. The last phase, i.e. the formation of the county of Torontál took place relatively late: the earliest surviving document mentioning its existence dates from 1326. Roughly between the mid-fourteenth and mid-sixteenth centuries, therefore, the following counties existed in the Duna-Tisza-Maros köz: Keve, Krassó, Temes, Torontál, and the southern parts of the counties of Arad and Csanád which lay on the left bank of the



Counties in the Danube–Tisza–Mureş
Region in the Late Middle Ages

River Maros. By the mid-sixteenth century, however, all these counties had ceased to function in consequence of the victorious advance of the Ottoman Turks, who occupied large parts of the medieval kingdom of Hungary.²⁰

²⁰ For the problematics of the Hungarian county system, see Gyula Kristó, *A vármegyék kialakulása Magyarországon* [The making of the counties in Hungary] (Budapest, 1988). For the counties in question, see especially 459–470. For the individual counties, see: Elek Benkő, “Arad 2,” in KMTL, 53–54; György Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza* [A Historical geography of Hungary in the age of Árpád] 4 vols (Budapest, 1963–1998), vol. 1, 163–188; Tibor Almási, “Csanád 3” in KMTL, 146; Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori*, vol. 1, 835–838; László Koszta, “Keve 2,” in KMTL, 348; Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori*, vol. 3, 305–321; Tibor Almási and Elek Benkő, “Krassó 3,” in KMTL, 380; Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori*, vol. 3, 467–498; Gyula Kristó, “Temes 2,” in KMTL, 669; Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában* [A Historical geography of Hungary in the age of the Hunyadis], vols. 1–3, 5, (Budapest, 1890–1913), vol. 2, 1–92; Gyula Kristó, “Torontál,” in KMTL, 681; Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi*, vol. 2, 124–130.

Central places by counties in the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureş region:²¹

Arad county: 17 central places, 10 to the North of the River Maros/Mureş and 7 south of the River Maros/Mureş (indicated with bold letters)

Category III: **Lippa/Lipova** 28.

Category IV: Arad 20.

Category VI: Dombegyháza 6, **Fellak/Felnac** 6, Kalodva 7, Papi 9, **Szádia**/? 8, **Szécsény/Secani** 6, Szentpál 6, **Sződi/Frumuşeni** 10, Váradia 6, **Zádorlaka/Zădăreni** 7.

Category VII: Kapronca 4, Kovászi 4, **Mácsalaka/Maşloc** 4, Pálülése 5, Szombathely 4.

Csanád/Cenad county: 13 central places, 8 to the North of the River a Maros/Mureş and 5 south of the River Maros/Mureş (indicated in bold letters)

Category III: **Csanád/Cenad** 27.

Category V: Nagylak 13, Vásárhely 14.

Category VI: Donáttornya 8, **Kanizsa/Novi Knježevac** 10, Makófalva 7, Torony 6.

Category VII: **Besenyő/Dudeştii Vechi** 2, Csomorkány 3, Kaszaperek 4, Kovácsháza 4, **Nagyfalu/Satu Mare** 4, **Perjámos/Periam** 3.

Keve/Kovin: 3 central places

Category V: Keve/Kovin 14.

Category VI: Barlad/Orlovat 6, Pancsal (Pancsova, Pančevo) 8.

Krassó/Caraş county: 21 central places

Category V: Érdsonlyó/Vrsac 12, Harám/Banatska Palanka 13, Kövesd/Bocşa 11, Mezősonlyó/Şemlacul Mare 13.

Category VI: Denta/Denta 7, Gatály/Gătaia, Illyéd, Krassó/Nagykarassó/Krassóő 7, Pozsaszin 8.

Category VII: Agyagos/Agadici 4, Boldogasszonyfalva/Jidovin 5, Csiglóbánya/

²¹ Our investigation is based on Kubinyi's research results. See Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat*, 59–101. Some of these medieval central places cannot be identified with modern settlements since they perished – most probably – during the Ottoman rule. The Roman numerals refer to the categories of central places as identified by András Kubinyi, while Arabic numerals indicate the central points of a certain locality.

Ciclova Română 3, Hám 4, Péterfalva/Greoni 4, Remete/Remetea Pogănici 3, Szerdahely/Veliko Središte 5, Ternova/Moldova 4, Tövissed 4.

Category VIII: Central place points cannot be ascertained: Kőszeg, Milos, Szőnyes.

Szörényi bánság/Banate of Severin: 4 central places

Category III: Sebes/Caransebeș 24.

Category V: Orsova/Orșova 11.

Category VI: Karán/Kavarán/Constantin Daicoviciu 7.

Category VII Miháld/Mehadia 5.

Temes/Timiș county: 34 central places

Category II: Temesvár/Timișoara 33.

Category V: Lugos/Lugoj 12.

Category VI: Begenye 7, Berény/Berini 7, Borzlyuk 7, Bozsor 7, Cikóvásárhely/Tîrgoviște 9, Csák/Ciacova 7, Cseri/Sacoșu Turcesc 9, Hodos/Hodoș 6, Horogszeg 9, Maráz 8, (Vizes)Monostor/Mănăștiur 9, Morzsina/Margina 10, Ohát 5, Ötvény/Utvín 10, Rékas/Recaș 7, Sarád 10, Sásvár 6.

Category VII: Berekszó/Beregsău Mare 4, Bulvenc 3, Csama 3, Endrőd(Facset)/Făget 5, Gladna 3, Györöd (Giroda)/Ghiroda 3, Iktár/Ictar-Budinț 5, Jenő/Ianova 2, Kenézrekesze 3, Komjáti 4, Paznád 3, Rekettyés 2, Széphely/Jebel 3, Újbécs/Peciu Nou 5, Zsidóváralka 4.

Torontál/Torontal county: 4 central places

Category VI: Aracs/Vranjevo 9, Bazsalhida/Bašaid 8, Becse/Novi Bečej 10, Becskerek/Zrenjanin 7.

Central places by categories in the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureș region:

Category I: 0

Category II: 1 (Temesvár/Timișoara)

Category III: 3 (Lippa/Lipova, Csanád/Cenad, Sebes/Sebeș)

Category IV: 0

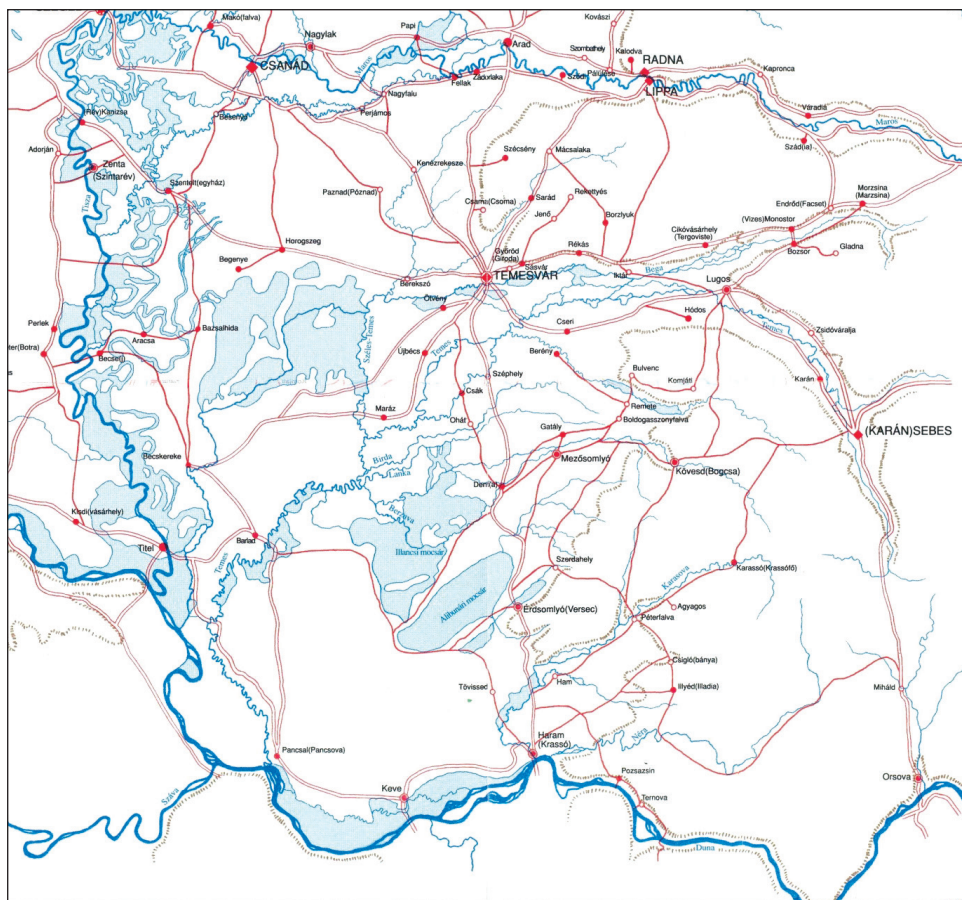
Category V: 7 (Keve/Kovin, Harám/Banatska Palanka, Lugos/Lugoj, Érdsonlyó/Vršac, Kövesd/Bocșa, Orsova/Orșova, Mezősonlyó/Șemlacu Mare)

Category VI: 35 (see above)

Category VII: 29 (see above)

Category VIII: 3 (see above)

Total: 78 central places



Central places in the Danube-Tisza/Tisa-Maros/Mureș region in the Later Middle Ages (Designed by András Kubinyi, drawn by Máttyás Kratochwill, in Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat* [Town development and market network])

According to our present knowledge altogether 78 central places existed in the Danube-Tisza/Tisa-Maros/Mureș region in the Later Middle Ages. The bulk of these localities (43%) were situated in the territory of Temes/Timiș county, which had the largest number of inhabitants and the highest population density in the region. It is very conspicuous that there is not a single settlement that is to be classified into Category I and IV. It is also surprising that only 1 locality is to be found in Category II. This is Temesvár/Timișoara, the most developed town of the region. Nevertheless, the central place points of this locality is so low (33) that Temesvár/Timișoara takes place not in the top, but in the lower section of its own category. In the Danube-Tisza/Tisa-Maros/Mureș region only 4 localities (Temesvár/, Lippa/Lipova, Csanád/Cenad, Sebes/

Sebeş) can be regarded – functionally – as towns. The 7 localities, constituting Category V, are to be regarded only as market towns with partial urban functions. The overwhelming majority of the central places (64) of the region in question constitute Category VI (35) and VII (29). Although all of them fulfil certain central place functions, from the point of view of urban development their role is negligible.

The most significant towns of the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureş region:

Temesvár (today Timișoara, Romania):

Between the beginning of the fourteenth and the middle of the sixteenth centuries Temesvár was the most important town and stronghold of this region. After a heavy siege Temesvár, fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1552.²² Obviously, this marked the end of the mediaeval history of the town, which can be studied with the help of written sources from the mid-twelfth century. The first document in which Temesvár appears is the description by Al Idrisí (1100–1165), the famous Sicilian Arab geographer, who proclaims Temesvár (“T.n.y.s.b.r.”) to be a splendid town located south of the River Tisza, and abounding in great richness. According to our present knowledge the attention of the Hungarian kings first turned towards Temesvár in the early fourteenth century. The hostile

²² The most recent works dealing with the medieval history of Temesvár (with references to the primary sources) are: István Petrovics, “Was there an ethnic background to the veneration of St. Eligius in Hungary?,” in Ladislaus Löb, István Petrovics and György Endre Szőnyi, eds, *Forms of identity. Definitions and changes* (Szeged: Attila József University, 1994) 77–87; István Petrovics, “Foreign ethnic groups and urban development in mediaeval Hungary: the case of Temesvár,” *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie V (1997): 235–245; István Petrovics, “Royal residences and urban development during the reign of the Anjou kings in Hungary,” *Historia Urbana* V, nr. 1 (1997): 39–66; Petrovics, “The fading glory,” 527–538; Petrovics, “Urban development,” 390–394; Petrovics, *A középkori Temesvár*; Petrovics, “Foreign Ethnic Groups,” 79–84; Petrovics, “Foreign ethnic groups and urban,” 202–209, 212–213; István Petrovics, “Two Letters of István Herceg, Principal Judge of Temesvár from the Sixteenth Century” in Dumitru Țeicu and Rudolf Gräf, eds, *Itinerarii istoriografice. Studii în onoarea istoricului Costin Feneșan* (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2011), 223–234; István Petrovics, “The Economic Activity of the Burghers of Medieval Temesvár/Timișoara,” in Andrei Stavilă–Dorel Micle–Adrian Cîntar–Cristian Floca–Sorin Forțiu, eds, *ArheoVest I – In Memoriam Liviu Măruia – Interdisciplinaritate în Arheologie și Istorie* (Szeged, 2013), 906–919; István Petrovics, “The Bishopric of Csanád/Cenad and the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Medieval Temesvár/Timișoara,” *Transylvanian Review* 22, Supplement No. 4 (2013): 244–249; Zsuzsanna Kopeczny, “Reședința regală medievală de la Timișoara [The Medieval Royal Residence from Timisoara],” *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie XXI (2013): 211–231; Zsuzsanna Kopeczny, “The Medieval Castle and Town of Temeswar (Archaeological Research Versus Historical Testimonies),” *Castrum Bene* 12 (The Castle As Social Place), ed. Katarina Predovnik (Ljubljana, 2014), 277–288.

attitude of the citizenry of Buda and the fact that virtually the entire realm was controlled by the “little kings” (oligarchs) led Charles I to seek a temporary residence here. The monarch paid his first visit to Temesvár in 1315, and had his royal residence there until 1323. It is not widely known, but even an attempt was made on the king’s life in the royal palace at Temesvár. Since Temesvár did not have the advantage of a central geographical location, the royal court moved to Visegrád, in the middle of the realm, soon after the death of the most powerful oligarch, Máté Csák, in 1321. This move in fact took place in 1323, when the last of the “little kings”, János Babonić, was subdued by Charles I. The departure of the royal court evidently did not favour the further development of Temesvár.

A new situation emerged in the 1360s, when Louis I (or the Great) launched a very active Balkans policy. This clearly increased the role of the *comes Temesiensis* and the importance of Temesvár, which, following from its favourable geographical location, served as the “gateway” to the Balkans. Louis I occupied Vidin in Bulgaria in 1365 and appointed a *banus* (bán) there to administer the affairs of the newly created *Bulgarian banate of Vidin*. It is important to stress that the jurisdiction of the *ban of Vidin* extended not only to Vidin, but also to those Hungarian castles which were located next to the banate of Vidin. These castles, among which Temesvár was perhaps the most significant, provided military protection for the banate of Vidin. This political arrangement proved to be merely temporary since the *banate of Vidin* ceased to exist in 1369. After 1369, the king transferred the authority of the former *ban of Vidin* to the *comes Temesiensis*, who thereby became one of the most powerful dignitaries of the realm.

The greatest obstacle to the development of the town was the overwhelming Turkish victory at Nicopolis in 1396 which resulted in Temesvár and the region around it becoming a permanent target of Ottoman attacks. Consequently, by the early fifteenth century, Temesvár assumed the role of a *border castle*. This evidently hindered its urban development, despite the fact that Pipo Ozorai (Filippo Scolari, 1396–1426) and János Hunyadi (1407–1456) as counts of Temes initiated significant building operations here. Since these building operations primarily focused on fortifying the castle and the town, they did not essentially promote urban development. At the same time, the administrative functions of Temesvár were broadened, since the exploitation of the salt deposit at Keve (today Kovin in Serbia) was controlled by Pipo Ozorai in Temesvár. The change in the status of Temesvár had been made in order to make the southern defence system more effective, since Ozorai, for a while, simultaneously held the offices of *comes Temesiensis* and *comes camerarum salium regalium*.

Temesvár is referred to in mediaeval charters as *villa*, *oppidum* and *civitas*. According to our present knowledge documents that contain franchises of the

hospites/cives of Temesvár do not appear to have survived from the medieval period. However, indirect evidence clearly reveals that the town enjoyed the right to hold weekly fairs, and the daily life of Temesvár was directed by the town council, consisting of the judge (*iudex*) and the sworn burghers (*iurati cives*). The first *iudex* is mentioned in written documents in 1390, and is named *Mychael dictus Poztos*. His Hungarian name, Posztós, refers to a person who was engaged either in the production or the selling of cloth. At present, only two charters are known to have been issued by the town council, one in 1498, and the other in 1523. However, Temesvár cannot be regarded as a royal free town since its autonomy was seriously restricted by the *comes* and *vicecomes Temesiensis* who had their seats in the town. From the point of view of urban autonomy, the most disadvantageous features were that in 1369 the authority of the ban of Vidin was transferred to the *comes Temesiensis*, and that from the late fourteenth century on the Ottoman advance led to the authority of the *comes Temesiensis* being significantly strengthened. In the early fifteenth century, for instance, Pipo Ozorai as *comes Temesiensis* also exercised jurisdiction over the counties of Csanád/Cenad, Arad, Keve/Kovin, Krassó/Caraș, Zaránd/Zarand, Csongrád, and 15 to 20 royal castles were also under his control.

The citizens of Temesvár are referred to in medieval charters as *cives et hospites*. The guests of Temesvár (*hospites de Themeswar*) are mentioned first in written documents in 1341. Unfortunately, there are only sporadic data as to the names and professions of the citizens and the social structure and ethnic composition of the town. The scattered personal names preserved in documentary evidence, various data concerning urban administration, and the geographical location of the town convincingly suggest that the *hospites*, and indeed the inhabitants of Temesvár, were preponderantly Hungarians until the mid-sixteenth century. In contrast with most other towns in the Hungarian kingdom, therefore, Latin and German guests did not play an important role in the development of mediaeval Temesvár. This is supported by the fact that a similar situation can be observed in the case of the nearby town of Szeged. However, a major shift occurred in the ethnic composition of the population of the Temes region in consequence of the regular Ottoman onslaughts that began in the late fourteenth century, and the migration and settling of new inhabitants following the Ottoman devastation. The above changes that took place in the Temesköz in the Late Middle Ages also had an impact on the ethnic make-up of the town of Temesvár itself. Nevertheless, the first Turkish state-tax return (*defter*) produced in 1554 proves that the Hungarians still constituted the majority of the inhabitants of the town (numbering around 4000 at that time) even two years after its fall to the Turks.

The first citizens of Temesvár whose names have survived are mentioned

in a charter issued in 1361. These citizens, *Valentinus filius Michaelis et Vehul [Utul?] dictus de Sumplijo cives de Themeswar*, were probably merchants who fell victim to the violent confiscation of their goods in the village of Akasztó, lying south-west of Kecskemét, in the region between the Duna and the Tisza. Benedict Himfi, lord of the *tributarius* who committed the violence, later compensated them for this unlawfulness. The above-mentioned charter permits the assumption that Temesvár had trading contacts with the western part of the realm already in the 1360s, and early fifteenth century documents unambiguously demonstrate that the merchants of Temesvár travelled with their goods to both the western and eastern parts of the country. A number of fifteenth century charters reveal that the merchants of Temesvár frequently came into conflict in Transylvania with the citizens of Nagyszeben (Hermannstadt, today Sibiu in Romania), who regarded them as their rivals.

Although the written documents frequently refer to the merchants of Temesvár (*mercatores de civitate Themeswar*), very little mention is made of the artisans living and working there. A *corrigiator* shows up in 1411, and, on the basis of the accounts of the royal domain of Temesvár from the year 1372, it appears justifiable to assume that in the late fourteenth century the *carpenters* formed a guild in Temesvár. A *sellator* (saddler) and a *pellifex* (furrier) are mentioned in the fifteenth century miracle collections of Saint John of Capistrano. These random references should be analysed together with the data of the *defter* of the sanjak of Temesvár, produced in 1554, i.e. two years after the fall of the town to the Turks, in which the names of the heads of families were recorded.

Various other facts prove that, despite its restricted autonomy, Temesvár was a very significant town in the Middle Ages. It may be mentioned, for instance, that Temesvár was among the first Hungarian towns to which a coat-of-arms was awarded. This took place most probably in 1365, i.e. precisely four years before Kassa (today Košice in Slovakia) received its own coat-of-arms. (Until recently, it was assumed that it was Kassa to which this royal favour was granted first.) The coat-of-arms of mediaeval Temesvár represents the figure of a dragon, which may symbolise Bogomil heresy.

The church institutions of the town also prove that Temesvár was a significant settlement. First of all, Temesvár was the centre of the *archidiaconatus Temesiensis*, which was divided into several smaller districts. At least two parish churches stood in the town, one dedicated to Saint Eligius, and the other to Saint George. Unfortunately, the legal position of a third church, dedicated to Saint Martin, has not yet been clarified. The Dominicans also had a friary there. This friary is mentioned first in 1323. The church of this monastery was under the protection of Saint Ladislas, King of Hungary, who was canonised in 1192.

There is convincing evidence for the existence of another cloister from the year 1405. Although the charter does not name the order to which the monastery belonged, mention of the patron saint, the Virgin Mary, allows the assumption that it was a Franciscan friary. From a supplication submitted to Pope Eugene IV in 1433, we learn that there were two hospitals in Temesvár. One, *Sanctus Spiritus*, was within the town-walls and had been founded by the citizens of Temesvár, while the other, *Decem milium militum*, founded by the widow of Pipo Ozorai stood outside the walls. Francesco Grisellini states that Pál Kinizsi, as *comes Temesiensis* after his triumphant campaign in Serbia in 1481, brought some 50 000 Serbians to Hungary upon his return, whom he settled around Temesvár – perhaps in the suburbs of the town. However, no indisputable documentary evidence is known that prove the existence of Greek Orthodox churches in Temesvár prior to 1552.

Concerning the topography of Temesvár, it may be stated that the town consisted of several parts: the castle, the town itself and the two suburbs adjacent to the town, named Nagy Palánk and Kis Palánk. The Ottoman state-tax returns produced in 1554 and 1579 mention fifteen streets in the town, of which only the name of eight can be explained: Halász, Nagy, Piac, Zajti(?), Monostor, Szent Erzsébet, Kapu and Tessöd.²³ The castle and the town were situated in a marshy region, a condition which left its mark both on the appearance of the town and on the construction-techniques.

Csanád (today Cenad, Romania)

The other two major towns in the region were Csanád and Lippa (today Lipova in Romania).²⁴ Both towns came into being on the left bank of the River Maros/Mureş, and in both towns salt deposits were exploited. As the centre of a bishopric, Csanád, played a very important role already from the 1030s and preserved its position as the leading town in the region until the early fourteenth century. Csanád was not only an episcopal see, but also the centre of the county of Csanád. Two chapter houses stood in the town: one, dedicated to Saint George, was a cathedral chapter and functioned as an outstanding place of authentication, while the other, placed under the protection of the Holy Redeemer, was a collegiate chapter (*capitulum collegiatum Sancti Salvatoris*). The Benedictine

²³ Petrovics, *A középkori Temesvár*, 38. Some of the streets were situated in the town itself, while others in the suburbs (Nagy Palánk and Kis Palánk)

²⁴ For Csanád, see: Kristó, "Csanád 2"; Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori*, vol. 1, 850–853; Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi*, vol. 1, 691; Samu Borovszky, *Csanád vármegye története 1715-ig* [The history of the county of Csanád until 1715] 2 vols (Nagyvárad 1896–1897), vol. 2, 72–103. Petrovics, "Urban development," 394–395. See also Petrovics, "The Bishopric of Csanád/Cenad," 241–243.

monastery in Csanád originated in the age of the Árpád dynasty and was dedicated to the Holy Mary (*monasterium Beatae Virginis*). By a papal decree, the possessions of this monastery were donated to the bishopric in 1493, while the church of the abbey was awarded to the Franciscans. The hospital of the town is mentioned in the early sixteenth century. Two parish churches stood in Csanád: one was dedicated to the Holy Spirit and is mentioned by a charter from 1412, whereas the other was under the protection of Saint Elizabeth and is referred to in 1399. The weekly market in Csanád was held on Saturday, however, no mention is made in the medieval documents of an annual fair. Both charters and narrative sources refer to Csanád as *civitas*. This corresponds to the situation that Csanád was an episcopal see. The citizens of the town are named *cives*, and the chief citizen of Csanád is referred to as a judge (*iudex*). Three judges of the town are known by name: 1417, Stephanus; 1440, Andreas Parvus; and 1456, Gallus Kalmar. Documentary evidence clearly reveals that the cathedral chapter was the landlord of the town. In consequence of this circumstance, the citizens of the town could not acquire broad autonomy. The mediaeval town of Csanád was destroyed by the Mongols in 1241 and then in 1514 by the crusaders of György Dózsa. The final destruction of the town can be associated with the Ottoman Turks, who eventually occupied Csanád in 1551.

Lippa (today Lipova, Romania)

The other major town of the region, Lippa, is also situated on the left bank of the River Maros, where the river reaches the Great Plain.²⁵ In the Middle Ages Lippa belonged to the county of Arad, and it became a really important centre only in the early fourteenth century, when Charles I frequently stayed there between 1315 and 1317. According to one opinion, the castle in the town was erected prior to 1324, while others believe that it was built only in the first half

²⁵ For Lippa/Lipova see Györffy, Árpád-kori, vol. 1, 180–181; Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi*, vol. 1, 760, 764; Sándor Márki, “Aradvármegye és Arad szabad királyi város története,” [The history of the county of Arad and of the free royal town of Arad], in Benedek Jancsó, ed., *Aradvármegye és Arad szabad királyi város monográfiája* [Monograph of the county of Arad and of the free royal town of Arad], vol. 2, part 1, (Arad 1892), 180–183; Pál Fodor, “Lippa és Radna városok a 16. századi török adóösszeírásokban,” [The towns of Lippa and Radna in sixteenth-century Ottoman state-tax returns], *Történelmi Szemle* 39 (1997): 313–334; Petrovics, “Urban development,” 395–397; Petrovics, “Foreign Ethnic Groups,” 80; István Petrovics, “Lippa város igazgatásának és kézműiparának néhány kérdése a késő középkorban” [Some questions concerning the administration of the town of Lippa and its craft industry in the Later Middle Ages], in József Bessenyei and István Draskóczy eds, *Pénztörténet – gazdaságtörténet. Tanulmányok Buza János 70. születésnapjára* (Budapest – Miskolc, 2009), 292–299; Adrian Magina, “Lipova at the beginning of the 17th century. Documentary contribution,” in Țeicu and Gräf, *Itinerarii istoriografice*, 297–321.

of the fifteenth century, when János Hunyadi acquired the domain of Solymos (today Șoimoș in Romania). Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the castle of Lippa and even the town itself depended closely on the castle of Solymos, situated on the right bank of the River Maros. After 1315 Solymos, the most important stronghold in the county of Arad, became a royal castle and was the appurtenance of the office of the *comes Orodiensis*.²⁶ In addition to the salt deposit, the town boasted a minting house and a royal tax-collecting chamber (*lucrum camere*). Originally, the tolls collected on the River Maros were shared by the Franciscan monks in Lippa and the chapter house in Arad. The proper names mentioned in early fourteenth to sixteenth century charters certify that Lippa had a handicraft industry on a relatively high level. One example may suffice here: a charter issued in 1475 mentions people living in Lippa, whose names appear together with their professions. Thus, mention is made of a *selliparius*, a *mercator*, a *faber*, a *pellifex*, a *zabo* (Szabó), a *warga* (Varga), a *Zekeres* (Szekeres), a *Fazekos* (Fazekas), an *Aztalgyartho* (Asztalgyártó) and a *Kerekgyartho* (Kerékgyártó). The first reference to craft guilds in Lippa is from the mid-sixteenth century, but they can be assumed to have existed much earlier too. The annual fair of the town (held on around 20 August) is attested to by the same charter. Throughout the fourteenth century, Lippa belonged to the king. In later centuries, however, the monarchs frequently donated or pledged the town to different landlords. To mention just a few such names: Jan Jiskra of Brandys, the Czech mercenary leader, captain-general in north-eastern Hungary, the Bánfis of Alsólendva, John Pancrace of Dengeleg, voivode of Transylvania, and John Corvin, natural son of King Matthias. Consequently, Lippa appears in written documents as *civitas* or *oppidum*. The citizens of the town are referred to as *cives* and the chief citizen as judge (*iudex*). The judge was supported in his work by the 12 sworn burghers (*iurati cives*). Documentary evidence indicates that the following judges directed the daily life of Lippa: 1455, Simon furrier (*Simon pellifex*); 1516–20, Peter blacksmith (*Petrus faber*); and 1525, Mathias Lukácsy (*Mathias Lukachy*). The most significant among the church institutions in the town was the Franciscan friary. This was founded by King Charles I of Anjou in the late 1320s, and was under the protection of his uncle, Saint Louis, Bishop of Toulouse. Lippa also had a hospital and a nunnery. According to the papal tithe lists produced in the 1330s, the highest amount of tax in the county of Arad was paid by the priests in Lippa. This fact clearly points to the high level of development attained by Lippa by the mid-fourteenth century. After the battle of Nicopolis in 1396, which resulted in the fall of the Second Bulgarian Empire,

²⁶ For Solymos (Soimoș), see: Pál Engel and István Feld, “Solymos,” in KMTL 605; Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1457* [Secular archontology of Hungary, 1301–1457], 2 vols (Budapest 1996), vol. 1, 413–414.

a large number of Slavic fugitives escaped to Hungary and settled in Lippa and the region around it. They were followed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by Serbian refugees, who further strengthened Greek Orthodoxy in the region. In 1529, John Szapolyai, King of Hungary, elevated Lippa to the rank of a royal free town, granting the law of Buda to Lippa.²⁷ This favourable change in the legal position of Lippa followed partly from the advantageous geographical location of the town, and partly from the fact, that by the early sixteenth century Lippa was indeed one of the most developed towns in the region. It should also be mentioned that John Szapolyai who controlled the eastern part of Hungary after the battle of Mohács, was now in the need of an appropriate royal seat, and thus upgraded the position of Lippa.

(Karán) Sebes (today Caransebeș, Romania)

Beside the towns discussed above, one more locality seems to have been of great importance prior to the mid-sixteenth century. This is (Karán)Sebes, the medieval precursor of modern Caransebeș in Romania. Sebes in the Later Middle Ages was the centre of one of the eight Romanian districts of the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureș region as well as the place where the Ban of Severin (Hungarian: szörényi bán) had his law-court. According to the 34th article of the *Decretum minus*, issued by King Wladislas II on 2 June 1498, Temesvár was the chief post where the tax “thirtieth” was collected and (Karán)Sebes acted as its branch.²⁸ There is also documentary evidence proving that a salt deposit was operated at Karánsebes in the Later Middle Ages, and that the town also functioned as the centre of a district from where the church tax, the tithe was collected. In addition to its administrative functions, Sebes was also a thriving commercial centre, located at the confluence of the Temes/Timiș and Sebes/Sebeș rivers and in the intersection of major trade routes leading to Temesvár (via Lugos/Lugoj), to the county of Hunyad (via the Erdélyi Vaskapu-hágó/Pasul Poarta de Fier a Transilvaniei) and to Orsova/Orșova.²⁹ It is highly probable that the burghers of Sebes enjoyed staple right in the Later Middle Ages, and that they had the privilege to organize their urban life along the principles of the

²⁷ The charter containing the privileges of the town of Lippa/Lipova is published in Gábor Fábrián, *Arad vármegye leírása historiográfiai, geográfiai és statisztikai tekintetben* [Historical, geographical and statistical description of the county of Arad] (Arad, 1835), 240–244.

²⁸ *Themeswar est capitalis tricesima, Karansebes est filialis ad eandem*. In *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, vol. 4 (1490–1526), edited and translated by János M. Bak, Péter Banyó and Martyn Rady (Idyllwild CA: Charles Schlacks Jr. Publisher, Budapest: Central European University, 2012), 110–111.

²⁹ Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat*, 83; Bálint Lakatos, “Városi nemesek Karánsebesen a 15–16. század fordulóján,” *Urbs. Magyar Várostörténeti Évkönyv* 3 (2008): 71–72

Law of Buda (Das Ofner Stadtrecht).³⁰ Written documents after 1515 referred to Sebes as *civitas*, which is explained by the fact that its town wall was erected at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is evident that the building of the town wall was the consequence of the Ottoman advance in the Balkans.³¹ It is also a characteristic feature of urban life in Sebes that a significant part of the population was constituted by Romanians.³² From a social point of view the structure of the local urban community also deserves attention. Surprisingly enough, the number of nobles living in the town and their presence in the town council was relatively high.³³

Finally, I would like to refer briefly to two towns, Arad and Szeged, which are situated outside, but in the immediate vicinity of the Duna–Tisza–Maros köz. In fact, Arad (today Arad in Romania) is located on the right bank of the River Maros, while Szeged was built at the confluence of the Maros and Tisza rivers, just opposite the mouth of the Maros, on the west bank of the Tisza. In the Middle Ages, both Arad and Szeged played important roles in the selling and storing of salt, which was transported from Transylvania down the River Maros. The town of Arad, which in the Middle Ages was located 7 kilometres east of modern Arad, on the territory of the present-day Őthalom/Glogovác (today Tudor Vladimirescu in Romania), soon came under the jurisdiction of the famous chapterhouse that stood there.³⁴ This chapterhouse was dedicated to Saint Martin and functioned as one of the most significant places of authentication in the region. Although the town of Arad was referred to as *civitas* both in 1329 and 1332, in fact it can be considered to have been, throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, an *oppidum* under the jurisdiction of the chapterhouse and the provost (*prepositus*). In contrast with Arad, Szeged was only the see of an archdeaconry (*archidiaconatus Segediensis*), from where the archdeacon moved, probably in the thirteenth century, to Bács (today Bač in Serbia),

³⁰ For the staple right see Frigyes Pesty: *A szörényi bánság és Szörény megye története*, vol. 3 (Budapest, 1878); Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat*, 83; Boglárka Weisz, *Vásárok és lerakatok a középkori Magyar Királyságban*. Magyar Történelmi Emlékek. Értekezések (Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont. Történettudományi Intézet, 2012), 73–74. For the use of the law of Buda see: Pesty, *A szörényi bánság*, 123–125, Lakatos, “Városi nemesek,” 81.

³¹ Kubinyi, *Városfejlődés és vásárhálózat*, 8, 83.

³² Ioan Drăgan, “Nobilimea românească și orașele în secolul al XV-lea,” in Ionuț Costea, Carmen Florea, Pál Judit and Rűsz-Fogarasi Enikő, eds, *Városok és városlakók/ Orașe și orașeni* (Cluj: Argonaut, 2006), 243–244; Lakatos, “Városi nemesek,” 71–94.

³³ Lakatos, “Városi nemesek,” 71–94.

³⁴ For Arad, see: Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi*, vol. 1, 765; Márki, *Aradvármegye*, 59–60, 175–180; Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori*, vol. 1, 170–172; Elek Benkő, “Arad 1,” in KMTL, 53; *A Körös–Tisza–Maros-köz települései a középkorban* [The Settlements of the region between the Rivers Körös, Tisza and Maros], ed. László Blazovich (Szeged 1996), 41–42.

a centre of the archbishopric of Bács-Kalocsa.³⁵ Consequently, there were no church institutions in Szeged to restrict the autonomy of the town. A further circumstance was the very favourable geographical location of Szeged: while the River Maros connected Szeged with Transylvania, the River Tisza created a link with the southern and northern parts of the realm. Moreover, from Szeged, with its very busy port, important land routes led to the western and north-western parts of the kingdom. To crown it all, the legal position of the town was also promising: Szeged, created as a legally unified town from three localities (Upper- and Lower-Szeged, and the central settlement named simply Szeged) in 1469, pertained to the king throughout nearly the whole of the Middle Ages. These conditions led to King Wladislas II declaring Szeged to be a royal free town in 1498. It should be remembered, however, that the new legal status of Szeged was enacted only in 1514. Naturally, this legal status could not have been acquired without an adequate economic background, the bases of which were provided by the large-scale cattle- and horse-breeding, and the wine-producing region of Szerémség (today Srem, divided between Serbia and Croatia). Animal husbandry and viticulture yielded produce that could easily be exported and thereby resulted in considerable capital.

Conclusions

Urban growth in the southern parts of the Hungarian Kingdom, including the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureş region, differed to a certain extent from the general pattern of Hungarian medieval town development. The most conspicuous phenomenon was that the number and impact of foreign settlers (especially Walloons and Germans) was not so significant here as in the other regions of the realm. To put it in a more precise way: Walloons appeared only in two localities, Pécs and Nagyolaszi (today Mandjelos, Serbia), while Germans lived only in Pécs. This means that east and northeast of the Danube, that is on the southern parts of the Great Hungarian Plain and in the Danube–Tisza/Tisa–Maros/Mureş region no “Latin” and German settlers played a role in the development of towns. There was, altogether, one town, Szeged where Jews could be found. Nevertheless, Jews appeared here not in the Early but in the Late Middle Ages, which, no doubt, paralleled the economic boom of Szeged.

From the point of view of economy the situation is characterised, on the one hand, by the lack of mining towns that mostly attracted Germans, while, on

³⁵ For Szeged, see: *Szeged története I. A kezdetektől 1686-ig* [The history of the town of Szeged, vol. 1, From the beginnings up to 1686,] (Szeged, 1983). The relevant parts were written by László Szegfű, István Petrovics, and Péter Kulcsár; Béla Kürti and István Petrovics, “Szeged,” in KMTL, 621–622.

the other, by the fact that only two merchant towns existed in this region. One was Pécs, which, in fact, was an ecclesiastical city, the see of the bishops of Pécs, but despite its restricted autonomy it proved to be a thriving commercial centre. The other was Szeged, the only locality of the region that could become a royal free town before the battle of Mohács (1526), which marks, in a sense, the end of the Middle Ages in Hungary. It is interesting, however, that in contrast with the typical merchant towns of the realm the burghers of Szeged traded basically with agrarian products: wine and cattle. The case of Szeged demonstrates in a crystal-clear form that it would be a mistake to underestimate this “agrarian character” since the burghers of Szeged could accumulate huge fortunes. Consequently, Szeged had become one of the most populous and richest towns of the realm by the early sixteenth century.

Szeged is also a good example of Hungarian autochthonous town development, demonstrating the fact that towns and urban institutions were not merely imported products of the foreign-speaking *hospites* who had settled in the Kingdom of Hungary. At the same time the medieval histories of Szeged, Temesvár/Timișoara, Lippa/Lipova and Sebes/Caransebeș show that the Hungarian burghers of these towns spread the urban way of life and urban institutions in general, among the non-Hungarian peoples (Serbs, Romanians) of the southern regions of the realm.

The fate of the towns discussed above also shows that the natural process of development in the southern parts of the Hungarian Kingdom including urban life, was interrupted by the regular Ottoman incursions that began in the late fourteenth century. Due to these destructive attacks, a major shift occurred in the ethnic composition of the population of this area. Many of the Hungarians who had survived the Ottoman attacks migrated to the central parts of the country, and their place was taken, from the fifteenth century onward, by Serbs and Romanians in large numbers. The immigrants continued to use the original Hungarian place-names, but obviously adapted them to their own language, as appears in the Turkish state-tax returns from the late sixteenth century.³⁶

The changes taking place along the southern borders of the realm had an impact on the ethnic make-up of the towns of the region as well. The only town in the Danube-Tisza/Tisa-Maros/Mureș region and its immediate vicinity that despite Ottoman rule could preserve its Hungarian character to a certain extent was Szeged.³⁷

All the facts above show that Ottoman rule in Hungary opened a new,

³⁶ Pál Engel, *A temesvári és moldovai szandzsák törökkori települései (1554–1579)* [The settlements of the sanjaks of Temesvár and Moldova under Ottoman rule, 1554–1579] (Szeged: Csongrád megyei Levéltár, 1996).

³⁷ István Petrovics, “A Witch-hunt in Szeged in the early eighteenth century,” in Blanka

not necessarily positive, chapter in the development of the southern regions of Hungary where the expulsion of the Turks in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century and the subsequent Habsburg resettlement policy of the country induced further changes in the ethnic structure.

ORAȘE ȘI AȘEZĂRI CU CARACTER URBAN ÎN REGIUNEA DUNĂRE-TISA-MUREȘ ÎN EVUL MEDIU

Rezumat

După o scurtă introducere privind dezvoltarea urbană în Ungaria medievală, autorul elucidează în acest studiu corelația dintre așezările cu caracter urban și orașe. Oferă o imagine comprehensivă a amplasamentelor acestor așezări și discută istoria orașelor importante din regiunea Dunăre-Tisa-Mureș. Autorul subliniază, în final, trăsăturile specifice dezvoltării urbane în părțile sudice ale Regatului medieval al Ungariei.

Szeghyová, ed., *The role of magic in the past. Learned and popular magic, popular beliefs and diversity of attitudes* (Bratislava: Pro Historia, 2005), 108–116.