

Theses of PhD dissertation

Castle names in the medieval Hungary

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1. The topic and objectives of the dissertation

Castle and fortress names make a special group within place names. These fortresses had highly important roles in both the European and, within that, the Hungarian history. Castle names are considered as a group of names of man-made places unlike natural names that denote mountains, rivers, etc. In Hungarian onomastics some name categories of these two main groups had already been extensively investigated. Among natural names, based on historical name collections monographies were published by ERZSÉBET GYÖRFFY (2011) discussing water names and by KATALIN RESZEGI (2011) concerning mountain names. Among names of artificial places, similar investigation was performed on Patrociny settlement names (MEZŐ 1996), settlement names including names of ethnic groups (RÁCZ 2016) and settlement names with *fal* 'village' ending (KÁZMÉR 1970). Although it is clear that certain parts of these naming groups had been already investigated well, castle names, a larger part of the name base that is important both for onomastics and history, have not been in the focus of such research yet. When the names of artificial places in the medieval era are mentioned, usually due to their large numbers and better processing, only settlement names are considered, therefore general conclusions are made based on this portion. It can be assumed, however, that if castle names that also make a larger portion of the medieval name base, would be included, certain assumptions and conclusions related to the category of the names of man-made places would be modified. The aim of my work was to investigate this special group of medieval names based on linguistic and onomastic aspects, while also considering the views of historians.

2. Methods and aspects of the processing work

My work consists three major parts. In the first part, I collected the scientific assumptions and views concerning castle names have been made so far. At first, I introduce the Hungarian and international linguistic and onomastic literature, then give an overview on the related results of history and archaeology on castles, that could have an effect on their name origins.

In the second part, the concept of castle names as a category of place names is determined, as it is necessary for selecting the names that should be included in the research process. Besides the distinctive characteristics of this conceptual category, the problems of determining proper name status are also discussed, including the problems encountered during the evaluation of dating.

The third part of my work is the largest chapter, where I conducted the onomastic investigation of the castle names of medieval Hungary. First, I discussed the names of early

castles (from 11st century to the second half of the 13th century) that played a central role in the new administrative system (*várispánság* in Hungarian, *Burggespanschaft* in German) established by Stephan I in the Carpathian Basin. In the first half of this chapter I discussed and evaluated the historical and linguistic theories concerning this castle name category and the specific names. After this, the onomastic investigation of the names of new type of castles that became dominant from the middle of the 13th century was conducted. At the end, the naming procedures of the two era are compared.

For the systematic linguistic analysis of castle names, I applied ISTVÁN HOFFMANN's multi-criteria typology of names (1993, 1999). According to the analytical model, in order to gather an overall view on the linguistic properties of the names, a two-way approach is required. On one aspect, the structure of the names must be investigated, including naming attitude (functional-semantic study) and what linguistic tools are applied to express the semantics that are present in the names (lexical-morphological study). On the second aspect, the linguistic processes applied for generating and integrating the newly formed names in the corpus of already existing place names need to be studied. During the systematic analysis of castle names, in order to avoid repetition and lengthiness, motivations of name-giving are discussed based as the main organising principle, however, as part of the analysis I also referred to the lexical-morphological structure of the names and the methods of naming.

Although for the naming of places various motivations could be accounted, based on the systematic analysis of the castle names, especially by the early name corpus, only a limited number of types dominate. Due to the limited number of names, it was not required to strictly follow HOFFMANN's model. In order to better understand the naming habits, I discussed the name-part functions according to their frequencies.

During the study I analysed the names of early castles (mainly part of the *várispánság*) and the set of new type castles separately. These two main group of fortresses show multiple differences, therefore I found it useful to investigate, if these could have any effect on the naming process.

The main difficulty during the analytical process was that the naming situation itself is unknown and very distant in time. In the reconstruction of the naming motivation by some examples, we could use the knowledge on names we have nowadays; however, in certain cases it could lead to incorrect conclusions. Regardless to the uncertainty of certain cases, the analytical frame could be used for identifying the general features of place names that could help to find the naming motivation of uncertain cases.

The name corpus of the study contains the castle names of the Carpathian Basin from the Árpád-era (1000-1301) to 1526. For constructing early castle name corpus, the work of GYULA

KRISTÓ, *A vármegyék kialakulása Magyarországon* (1988) was used, while for the two era of new type castles the work of ERIK FÜGEDI, *Vár és társadalom a 13–14. századi Magyarországon* (1977) was applied. These monographs serve as good base for collecting the main name set for my study, however it should be noted that due to their older publication dates, newer source materials and archaeological results are not included. Therefore, concerning the Árpád-era, beside the work of KRISTÓ, I included the newest review of the topic, the work of ATTILA ZSOLDOS, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1000–1301* (2011). For the names from the beginning of the 14th century, the work of PÁL ENGEL, *Magyarország világi archontológiája* (1996) was also taken into consideration. These works were mainly dedicated to historians; therefore, they provide exact information about the types of castles, owners, castellans, however, only little knowledge that is strongly related to linguistics is provided. The main difficulty when using these source works for linguistic purposes is that they are prepared by historians for historical researches and therefore the name forms they use do not reflect the original name use (the original spelling), but rather a more recent version.

It can be seen that the presented works could be used for reconstructing the base set of castle names, however for collecting the name data of the castles, different sources had to be found. For the castle names of the Árpád-era I primarily applied the work of GYÖRGY GYÖRFFY, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza* (Gy.), the *Korai magyar helynévszótár* (KMHsz.), and the *Árpád-kori új okmánytár* (ÁÚO.). Concerning the later periods, I primarily used the *Anjou-kori oklevéltár* (AOkl.), the *Anjoukori okmánytár* (A.), the *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár* (Zs.), for the Hunyadi-era (15th century) the works of DEZSŐ CSÁNKI (Cs.) and ANTAL FEKETE NAGY (FEKETE NAGY). Beside these materials, I also included the data of other publications in order to construct the name corpus. During the collecting process, I also examined the copy of the charters cited by these publications. To discover the etymology of the investigated castle names, I applied the *Földrajzi nevek etimológiai szótára* (FNESz.) of LAJOS KISS.

The collected name set contains nearly 780 castle names. Among these there are more that refer to castles located in Croatian and Slavonian territories, and a few are located in Serbian or Bosnian territories, that have Hungarian relations.

3. New scientific results of the dissertation

The Earliest Castle Names

Castles built between the reign of Saint Stephen and the first part of the 13th century make up the earliest group of Hungarian fortresses. With the settlement of Hungarians, a new administrative system was organized in the Carpathian Basin with castles serving as their centers.

The administrative units of the *várispánság* and *vármegye* (comitat) were built around these and were headed by the *ispán* (Latin *comes*, Slavic *župa*, German *Gespan*) appointed by the monarch. The castles thus created also received a name and as a result we are aware of about 130 names of castles from this era. Based on the motivation of naming, these early castle names may be divided into four main groups. More than one fourth of these castles were named after a person (*Borsod*, *Szabolcs*, *Bihar*, *Keve*, *Pata*, *Békés*, *Szolnok*, etc.) and in many cases in this group, scholars have associated the origin of castle names with the name of the first *ispán*. This form of naming, however, may be presumed with greater certainty only in the case of a few castle names (e.g. *Hont* cf. 1339: *Hund*, personal name, etc.). More than one third of early castle names fall within the group of names referring to a location (from hydronyms: *Borsova*, *Bodrog*, *Krassó*, *Kraszna*, etc., names of mountains: *Pozsega*, *Gora*, etc., names of regions: *Torna*, *Szilágy*, *Árva*, etc., oikonyms: *Úrhida*, *Szolgagyőr*, *Bánya*, etc.). It is not rare either that the name of the castle was borrowed from another, mostly Slavic language into Hungarian (*Baranya* < Sl. *brána* ‘gate, dam, rampart’, *Nógrád* < **Novogradъ* ‘new castle’, *Csongrád* < Sl. *Černogradъ* ‘black castle’, etc.). Beside these, although in less cases, other naming motivations can also be accounted: the age of the castle is expressed by the names of *Óvár* ‘old castle’ and *Újvár* ‘new castle’, *Fehérvár* ‘white castle’ refers to a color, the name of an animal may appear in *Sasvár* ‘eagle castle’, and the name of a plant in *Sásvár* ‘sedges castle’.

In my work the names of earlier fortresses that were not connected to the mentioned administrative system (*várispánság*) are also included (*Örsúr*, *Tas (vára)* ~ *Tas(vár)*, *Csákvára*, *Oroszvár*, *Orsova*, *Alpár*, *Kalocsa*, *Pécs*, *Sóvár*, *Himesudvar* etc.). These names showed similar properties to the other early castles, differences are only visible in the ratio of naming motivations: most of the castles have person related names or include a common word related to a person (e.g. *Csákvára*, *Örsúr*). Similarly great number of the names refers to local relationship, however, most of the names are derived from settlement names (e.g. *Alpár*), (only three castles were named after waters: *Szekcső*, *Sárvár*, *Orsova*), as the early castles, owned by bishopric, were named after the settlement where they were built (e.g. *Kalocsa*, *Eger*, *Vác*, *Pécs*). The ratio of names indicating other properties is rather low.

During my research I also investigated the name parts of fortress names that have type-indicator function. Within this group, only *Várad* denoting a motte castle, located in Bars county contains only one name constituent. About one fifth of the early castle names can be found in a two-component form, all of these names have the *vár* ‘castle’ geographical word as second part, that can be present in basic form (e.g. *Ungvár*, *Temesvár*) or in genitive form (e.g. *Abaujvára*, *Csákvára*).

New type castle names

Compared to the set of early castle names, the corpus of names of new type castles contains five-times more names, although the time periods are nearly the same (I chose the end 1526 as the end date, although the battle of Mohács did not affect the castle building of the country), that could be due to the rapid increment of castle buildings in the era, beside the growing number of written sources. Most of the names of new-type-castles refer to their location, half of the names in the group has such motivation (e.g. from water name: *Kabold*, mountain name: *Csókakő*, *Tarkő*, settlement name: *Kertes*, *Fenes*, *Tamási*). In many cases the castles were named after a person (e.g. *Adorján*, *Nekse*, *Ivanc*). Nearly one eighth of the names are adapted from other languages (designating function), mainly from Slavic (e.g. *Garadna*, *Hradek* < Sl. *gradъ* ‘castle’ lexeme), and a smaller number of names has German origin (e.g. *Kreuzburg* ‘cross castle’). About 8% of the castles were named after their visible physical features (e.g. size: *Nagyvár* ‘big castle’, colour: *Világosvár* ‘bright castle’, some material present around the location or that was used for building: *Kővár* ‘stone castle’, vegetation: *Somoskő* ‘cornel stone’, wildlife: *Hollókő* ‘raven stone’, *Saskő* ‘eagle stone’). In the case of about the tenth of the names one may account for multiple equally probable motivation (e.g. named after settlement/person: *Soklós*, later *Siklós*, named after person/vegetation: *Gesztes*).

Among the new-type-castle names, there are 117 castle names that contains geographical common noun (mostly *vár*) as a second name constituent. The type-indicating function could be theoretically present in three name structures: single-constituent type-indicating name, designating + type-indicating two-component names, and feature-indicating + type-indicating two-component names (cf. HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017: 32–35), however, nearly all investigated castle names show the latter two structures. Data contain the nominative form of *vár* are mainly in sources from the 14th century (e.g. *Bélvár*, *Rákosvár*), names containing the lexeme with a genitive ending could be dated back to the 15th century (e.g. *Apajvára*, *Járavára*). Among the new-type-castle names *palota* ‘palace’ and *torony* ‘tower’ also appears in similar structures (e.g. *Derzspalotája*, *Simontornya*).

A smaller, but specific group of medieval castle names consists of names having *kő* ‘stone’ as their second constituent. As this lexeme is originally a mountain indicating word, I found it important to separately investigate what is the reason behind the appearance and spread of castle names ending in *kő* in medieval Hungary by introducing the temporal and geographical circumstances of the appearance of this name cluster. I have found 42 names with *kő* as their second constituent from this age. Examining them, we can see that this name type appeared in the second half of the 13th century, and names ending in *kő* can be documented especially frequently

in the first half of the 14th century. We can find several castle names from this period which—being castles on mountains—were formed from oronyms (*Dédeskőve*, *Csókakő*). The approach towards naming might have been influenced by the fact that the walls of these castles often looked as if they had been growing out of the bare rocks, moreover, parts of the castles were rooms cut into the rocks (e. g., *Ajnácskő*, *Korlátkő*, *Boldvakő*). Afterwards this name type lost some of its productivity, but similar names were still formed, and from the 15th century they appeared in areas where oronymic antecedents could not have been motivating the naming. These castles were built not on steep, rocky mountains but in valleys and on smaller hills (*Nyestkő*, *Kígyókő*, *Márványkő*, *Vázsonykő*). In these cases, we can account for the effects of analogy: these castles were built relatively close to each other in mountainous areas, so their names could have already been known in the area. The spread of castle names ending in *kő* could also have been influenced by the motivating effect of German castle names ending in *Stein* ‘stone’. When we project the names onto a map, we can see that these fortresses built from stone are situated more densely in forested mountainous areas (especially in the Northern and Western part of the country), while on the plain there are significantly fewer of such castles.

The study ends with the comparative analysis of the two castle name corpus. Based on structural aspects, the two groups show great similarities: most of the names are single-constituent name forms in both sets. The ratio of the main naming patterns are also similar, however, the ratios of subcategories show more significant differences. In both time periods, expressing local relation was the most common name-giving motivation, but while in the early name set referring to water is the main type, new-type-castle names include settlement names most frequently. By the end of this period, castle names ending in *kő* ‘stone’ became also typical, while the water-related naming became less popular: it was rather applied in an indirect way (e.g. water > settlement > castle order naming).

Similar portion of the two castle name categories could be accounted with person-related naming and similar portions could be seen for designating function. Some differences could be pointed out between the two name groups concerning the feature-indicating names: among the new-type-castle names more characteristics could be identified that could probably be due to the larger number of this name corpus. Beside the common motivations (colour, age, function), new-type-castles also were names after their size and material.

Based on the functional-semantic analysis of castle names it can be seen that compared to names of man-made places, including settlement names, motivations of naming of castles show a less diversity. (For the comparison, as the full processing of settlement names in the medieval

Hungary is not available yet, I used the monographic analysis of settlement name corpus of Bihar county, the largest county in the time period.) Some semantic features that are frequent in settlement names cannot be found in the castle name corpus, e.g. occupation-, patrociny-, service-related names; naming after building could be also excluded. No castle name indicates the shape of the fortress, those name forms that seem to refer to shape are mainly originating from mountain names. In certain castle names tribal, ethnic and patrociny connections could be identified indirectly, as these castle names were settlement names previously. Difference also could be pointed out in the ratio of common naming motivations, most significantly in the cases of person-related names: while one third of the settlement names of Bihar county expresses this feature, only one seventh of the castles was named in this manner (RÁCZ 2005: 168).

I also conducted the comparison of the castle names and settlement names based on the name-giving methods. Considering the names of early and new-type-castles, it can be seen that the most frequent name-giving form was metonymic name formation, in both cases, more than half of the sets could be accounted. The ratio of borrowed names, however, decreased with time: in the case of early castles, more than one fifth of the names could be considered here, while less than one tenth of new-type-castles was named in this way. Names that were created by structural change make up a larger portion of the early castle name set. Syntactic name formation was more frequently used to create names for new-type-castles, while about one tenth of the names of early castles could be considered here. Morphological name formation could be considered peripheral. In the case of certain castle names—nearly tenth of the new-type-castle names—multiple methods could be suspected.

Considering the name-giving methods of settlement names, similar ratios could be found. Comparing with the settlement names of Bihar county, it can be seen that most of the names were formed similarly by semantic name formation, although some difference could be pointed out considering the ratio of metonymic name formation, and the absence of meaning split in the case of castle names. Among settlement names, names created using syntactic name formation also make up a larger group (RÁCZ 2005: 222), which is also the second largest—but less dominant—group within castle name corpus. As for the different syntactic name formation, a greater difference could be found: no castle name was formed using coordinate structure, while among settlement names, a few examples could be identified. Considering morphological name formation, castle names were only created by using name-formants, while among settlement names one can find examples for other suffixes as well. Metaphoric and inductive naming are really peripheral in the name corpus of castle names, among settlement names however, there are a few examples even for these kind of name-giving methods (RÁCZ 2005:179–180, TÓTH 2001).

Although the comparison of settlement and castle names presented here is not complex enough for general statements, it was useful for indicating that when general assumptions are made regarding the name set of man-made places, the group of castle names should also be considered.

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