

## Two groups of place names preserving Hungarian cultural heritage

GÁBOR MIKESY<sup>15</sup>

Place names constitute a category of linguistic elements having a rather complicated semantic structure. On the one hand, they reflect on the attributes of the denoted place, on the other hand, they refer to the linguistic and social tendencies as well as the naming traditions of the given ethnicity. For the primary function of place names (i.e. the identification of places) stability in form is indispensable. Place names, as fixed forms, may be affected by language historical changes differently from the rest of vocabulary.

My study focuses on two kinds of retaining cultural heritage in place names: a) personal names preserved in place names, b) words for professions and human activities that are only maintained in place names. Both groups represent types of great importance concerning early Hungarian place names. A unique feature of early Hungarian toponymy in the region is that elements of certain groups of proper names (ethnicities, tribes, persons, etc.) could become toponyms without any grammatical transformation (derivation). The first one is illustrated with personal names of the early ruling class, e.g. *Aba*, *Solt*, *Taksony*, while the place names *Hőgyész* and *Mizdó*, referring to curing ermine fur and paying tax with honey, respectively, are presented as examples of the second group.

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<sup>15</sup> Lechner Knowledge Centre, Budapest (Hungary).

Language contacts are also discussed concerning both groups. Hungarian (a member of the Uralic language family) found itself in a (mostly Indo-European) linguistic environment Carpathian Basin, in which the phonotactic structure of words caused a strong tension and had a significant effect on word borrowing (including the adoption of proper names). The most important ones are the dissolution of consonant congestion at the beginning of the word (Slavic *Влатънъ* > Hun \**Balatin*) and the vowel harmony in Hungarian (*Balatin* > *Balaton*).

In the early stages of settlement, several internal phonotactic tendencies were also underway, such as the displacement of the vowel system in the velar direction (Sl *potok* > Hun *patak* 'stream') and the transformation of the CVCVCV structure into a CVCCV structure (Sl *malina* > Hun *málna* 'raspberry').

These tendencies had lost much of their strength in the course of the first half of the millennium, and they are not of high account in today's Hungarian language. Forms formed by early tendencies (eg. *Priamos* > Hun *Perjámos*) often do not have any continuation in the modern Hungarian language, the village name *Perjámos* is a medieval fossil. In today's Hungarian this name form is not motivated, cannot be identified with the ancient king of Troy, and no such personal name is used.

Similarly, the Slavic *tesár* word 'carpenter' was adopted and used by the medieval Hungarian language. In accordance with the tendency to strive for vowel harmony, palatal and velar versions of it were also developed (e.g. *Barstaszár*, *Pápateszér* village names) in the western half of the Carpathian Basin. However, modern Hungarian no longer knows the word that remained only in place names.