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The History of Onomastic Research in Debrecen



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# **The History of Onomastic Research in Debrecen**

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## Introduction

Onomastic research has a rich past in Debrecen; achievements made initially by individual researchers and later on by the onomasticians' workgroup founded two decades ago make the city's university an important base of Hungarian onomastics.

The history of onomastic research in Debrecen can be divided into three main phases. The first phase can be dated to the second half of the 1930s, when works applying scientific norms to the study of names appeared; however, historical and political changes put an end to these promising beginnings rather quickly. During the next decade, the topic of onomastics completely disappeared from Hungarian linguistic research, just like on the national level. By the end of the 1950s, science policy decision makers yet again allowed room for onomastic research, and from the 1960s onwards, researchers at the Institute of Hungarian Linguistics at the University of Debrecen—while it was not their main field of scientific work—all took part in onomastic research to a greater or lesser extent. From the second half of the 1970s onwards, this set of issues became an ever more prominent feature of the institute's profile, but it still appeared as the achievements of individual researchers only. In this respect, a great change was brought about in 1995 with the establishment of the doctoral school of linguistics, and the subprogram of onomastics launched under its auspices. The significance of this event lies in the fact that it allowed for the gradual creation of a coherent and efficient workgroup engaged primarily in historical toponomastic research, the members of which group, in addition to their personal projects—partially built upon each other's work—also take part in research projects of a larger scale, thus contributing to the advancement of the scientific field with quite spectacular achievements. Thus, the third phase of onomastic research in Debrecen can be dated from the initiation of the doctoral program.

## 1. The Csúry School of Thought

In Hungary, onomastic research involves mostly universities and colleges. Debrecen is one of the oldest university towns in Hungary. The Reformed College of Debrecen, founded in 1538, has been providing higher education for more than four centuries, within the framework of which, besides the schools of theology and law, there are also chairs of humanities. Drawing upon the intellectual resources of this institution and its great heritage, the National Assembly of Hungary issued a decree in 1912, ordering the establishment of a state university in the city. Educational activities at the new university started in the autumn of 1914, and the same year, the Institute of Hungarian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics was founded, with József Pápay as its first professor. At the time, while teaching and research at the various departments of Hungarian institutions of higher education was almost exclusively carried out by the professors, the teachers of the department also held courses on Finno-Ugric and Hungarian linguistics. The scientific interests of each professor, in turn, essentially defined the profiles of their respective departments with regards to both research and education. Pápay was primarily a scholar of Finno-Ugric studies, and his main field of research was the Khanty language. Under his leadership, the Institute rose to the status of an internationally renowned centre of Finno-Ugristics (Jakab–Keresztes 1990).

Following the death of Pápay in 1932, Bálint Csúry, previously a professor of the Reformed College of Kolozsvár (Cluj), became the head of the department; within barely a decade, he turned the research work at the institute in a new direction. He was an expert with many interests: besides issues of the Hungarian language, he also dealt with general issues of linguistics, the philosophy and psychology of language, and, as a professor at the department, he held classes not only on Hungarian linguistics, but also Finno-Ugristics. His interests, however, were focused on the study of dialects, which field also defined his activity as an educator at the university.

Previously, so far as dialects were concerned, experts were interested in curiosities and phenomena diverging from the generic vernacular; Csúry, on the other hand, believed that the language of each geographical region has to be explored in its complexity, that is, firstly, it is not sufficient to study those words which are different from the generic vernacular, but instead, the entire lexicon of the given community must be collected; secondly, words cannot be examined torn out of their usage context, but folk culture must be considered as

well. His work as a collector spanned several decades, eventually culminating in the publication of the first dictionary on a regional dialect (“Szamosháti szótár”, [The dictionary of Szamoshát]) in 1935-1936, which served as an etalon for several later dictionaries of dialects. Even though Csűry carried out no direct research on proper names, he still thought it important to collect not only the appellative elements of dialects, but, as an element of their complexity, also their proper names. In an essay he wrote on the methodology of collecting folk dialects (1936), he explicitly emphasises the significance of collecting proper names, and in particular, toponyms, as these elements of language often preserve old words and meanings. Additionally, toponyms also deserve attention due to the conclusions they make possible on the history of settlements. Csűry even gave practical guidance on collecting toponyms: the phonemic form of the name, the object it denotes, the localization of the object, as well as any traditions of legends associated with the place or its name all have to be recorded. Accordingly, Csűry’s dictionary includes some one thousand toponyms and one hundred anthroponyms (mostly nicknames), with some animal names (names for horses, dogs, etc.) and names for celestial bodies occurring as well. In addition to current language names, the dictionary also includes a high number of obsolete names, and names always appear together with their localizations. As shown above, Csűry recognized the fact that toponyms and other types of proper names can have versatile uses; therefore, he considered systematically collecting them important. In line with his theories, he often mentioned proper names in his essays—along with examples for appellatives—to highlight various linguistic phenomena (cf. Kálnási 1998).

Csűry was outstanding not only as a linguist, but also as a teacher; he strove to introduce students of Hungarian linguistics to reliable and modern linguistic knowledge. At the same time, he also made efforts to train his best students those with the most enterprising spirits into becoming experts of folk linguistics. It is a testimony to the success of his work that during the nine years of his professorship he trained some thirty experts to research folk linguistics. Relying on these experts, he intended to turn the folk language collection into a branch of Hungarian linguistics designated as a program and extended to the whole country.

Within the framework of the program to explore Hungarian folk language in a planned and organized manner, he founded “Magyar Néprnyelvkutató Intézet” [Hungarian Folk Language Research Institute]—the first of its kind in the country—in the second half of the 1930s, thus organizing the work up to that point performed by his students separately into a single large plan. One of the important items in the folk language collection program was the introduction of a system into the collection of toponyms. In this spirit, work was commenced in

1937 to collect the toponyms of the comitat of Bihar, found in the Eastern part of the Carpathian Basin. The success of the program can be measured by the fact that by 1941, the year in which Bálint Csúry passed away, students and young educators had collected toponyms from a total of 43 settlements in Bihar. Names were collected from the locals using maps, and current usage names were supplemented by a historical onomastic corpus assembled through archival research. The applied methodology and the lessons learnt from the collection provided a solid basis for planning the national collection of toponyms, restarted in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Beyond the collection of folk language and toponyms, processing the collected linguistic material was also important to Csúry. To that end, in 1939, he launched the first periodical of Hungarian dialect research under the title “Magyar Népnyelv” [Hungarian Folk Language], providing researchers of dialects with an essential forum to publish their works, while also promoting the professional development of his young associates. Amongst other topics, Debrecen researchers published some articles on the subject of onomastics: Attila Szabó T. discussed the issue of anthroponyms included in toponyms (1940), Samu Imre published the toponyms of Felsőőr (1940), and Iván Balassa those of Szerep (1939). The latter two articles are good examples of the type of toponymic publications based on Csúry’s instructions; they are characterised by the richness of supporting data, easy to grasp and organized into entries, and therefore convenient both for a general overview and easy to read.

As it can be seen, Csúry, while not an onomastician himself, still exerted significant influence on Hungarian onomastic research through his lifetime achievements. This is because at the time (the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) linguistics in Hungary were dominated by the historical approach, with representatives aiming to familiarize themselves with medieval language usage and changes in language, therefore examining the linguistic corpora of written medieval sources. The study of names was also carried out in the context of historical linguistics. The objective prominent representatives of onomastic research wished to accomplish was to shed light on the ethnic composition of the medieval Carpathian Basin. This was also one of the purposes served by the Hungarian etymological research of the time, which was at an international level. With such objectives, experts focused on the historical onomastic corpus, and in particular hydronyms and settlement names. Therefore, the significance of Csúry’s lifetime work lies in part in raising awareness about the importance of the collection as well as and the study current usage onomastic corpus. It was under this influence that Csúry’s disciple, Attila Szabó T. launched a new research program in Transylvania, in which the study of the contemporary toponymic corpus was given greater emphasis, and, unlike the general trends of



historical onomastic research of the time, attention was given not only the names of settlements and hydronyms, but also to microtoponyms. In other words, another element of Csúry's lifetime achievement important for onomastic research is his work as an educator, the training of dedicated experts.

Following Csúry's death (1941), the collection work he started on folk language and toponyms, as well as the research of toponyms, halted and then ceased altogether. However, several of the experts trained by him had notable roles both in the research work on folk language carried out to create an atlas of dialects, and organized by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in the 1950s (Samu Imre), and in promoting and directing the onomastic research work restarted in the 1960s (József Végh).

## 2. Decline and New Momentum

**2.1.** From the end of the 1940s onwards, due to policy reasons, those who made decisions on scientific issues did their best to stifle toponymic work, and, indeed, they managed to create a hiatus of more than a decade in the Hungarian history of the science.

At the time, after the death of Bálint Csúry, a renowned historical linguist, Géza Bárczi became the head of the Institute of Hungarian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics at the University of Debrecen (1941-1951). Bárczi made efforts to continue the work started by his predecessor. He had an important role in launching the national collection of dialects and in the work on the atlas of dialects (which task was later re-assigned to the Research Institute for Linguistics at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences). Yet, in an atmosphere of ever less favourable science policies, the room for scientific research was becoming ever narrower in Debrecen, too. In 1949 the “Magyar Népryelvkutató Intézet” [Hungarian Folk Language Research Institute] was dissolved, and this was the same year in which the periodical “Magyar Népryelv” [Hungarian Folk Language] was published for the last time (volume 6). The periodical was relaunched by Bárczi in 1951 under the title “Magyar Nyelvjárások” [Hungarian Dialects] as a yearbook of the Institute of Hungarian Linguistics at the University of Debrecen. The periodical has been a prestigious forum of research on Hungarian dialects ever since—during the past sixty years, its scope has been continuously broadened, beyond the essays and studies published in it on dialects, descriptive and historical linguistic works, writings on linguistic theory and stylistics, and recently even articles on sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics have been provided room on its pages. The first study on onomastics was published in the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume, and as time progressed, in the last twenty to thirty years—reflecting changes in the department’s profile—the ratio of such works has been increasing with each volume.

Bárczi’s work on historical linguistics brought about significant achievements in the field of Hungarian onomastic research as well. In 1951 he published a work in which he processed the first Hungarian charter to have survived to this day in an authentic copy, the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany from 1055. In medieval times—following European standards—the language of written Hungarian documents was Latin, still, the texts of the charters include Hungarian anthroponyms and toponyms in large numbers, occasionally even appellatives. Bárczi’s monograph set an example to follow when processing

Hungarian language elements originating from this kind of source (charters), and his analyses defined views on the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany for about half a century.

In 1952, Bárczi was invited to teach at a university in Budapest, which invitation he accepted. Other profound changes also took place at the department; the Institute of Hungarian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics, up to that point a single organizational unit, was divided into two departments: the Department of Hungarian Linguistics and the Department of Finno-Ugric Linguistics. As subdivisions of the Institute of Hungarian Linguistics, the two small departments kept close ties with each other (Jakab–Keresztes 1990).

**2.2.** Science policies disabling research on onomastics lasted till the end of the 1950s in Hungary, an indication of positive changes is the first conference on Hungarian onomastics held in 1958. In the same year, a new volume of Géza Bárczi's work on the history of the Hungarian word corpus was published, which volume summarized the issues surrounding proper names.

During the times when onomastic research was gaining momentum at the University of Debrecen, the Department of Finno-Ugric Linguistics was led by Béla Kálmán (1952-1984), who had an important role in gradually turning the Institute of Hungarian Linguistics into one of the centres of Hungarian onomastic research. Like Bálint Csúry, Kálmán was a researcher with a colourful personality, which is well reflected in the variety of the works he produced during his career. Besides Finno-Ugristics, he also dealt with the history of the Hungarian language and descriptive linguistics, while taking an active part in the collection work for the atlas of dialects. He was considered an accepted authority within Finno-Ugristic and Hungarian linguistic circles alike. Thus, it is no surprise that his name came up for department head at both new departments. Eventually, he was appointed the Head of the Department of Finno-Ugric Linguistics, but he also kept up his research on Hungarian linguistics, and held lectures on onomastics for years. In the words of his student, István Hoffmann, Kálmán “was fascinated primarily by the world of words, and in particular curiosities, exotics. Probably this is why the world of names, often found to be mysterious, puzzling and at times downright magical not only by laymen, but even by experts, aroused his interest—a world science itself has been dealing with ever since the scholarly mind has first contemplated language.” (2013a: 393).

As a summary of his onomastic research, he published a volume under the title “A nevek világa” [The World of Names] (Kálmán 1967a), which was the first endeavour in the history of Hungarian linguistics to give a detailed introduction to the two primary types of proper names, anthroponyms and toponyms. The main purpose of the book is to examine Hungarian names, in

addition to which, however, the author also introduces names from a number of other languages, and as systems of names have multifaceted relationships between each other, Hungarian personal name and place name corpora include many names of foreign origin.

Anthroponyms are discussed in the volume by their etymological origins: besides Hebrew, Greek, Latin and German names, names from the Turkic and the Arab languages, as well as two Finno-Ugric languages, related to Hungarian, namely Mansi and Estonian, are also introduced. The description of individual etymological layers also allows the reader to get a picture of the cultural-historical background, the name-giving customs of various ages and cultures. When discussing the types of Hungarian anthroponyms, Kálmán deals with single- vs. multi-element names separately, and with regards to the latter type, he provides an in-depth elaboration on the formation and uptake of family names. In his opinion, the formation of family names and the uptake of written culture were closely interlinked. The development of a written culture (and, through it, the system of family names) stemmed from a legal necessity; the unique, distinguishing names given to taxpayers simplified legal transactions and taxation both for the clerks and the taxpayers themselves (in his other writing, Kálmán also emphasised the importance of European cultural traditions and models, cf. 1979). Furthermore, Kálmán also introduces topics relevant to this type of name, such as the way name orders are set, bynames and pseudonyms, anthroponyms given by authors, and the problems involved by changing one's name.

The discussion of toponyms provided in the book is organized a bit differently from that of anthroponyms, that is, by types, with etymology being applied as the criterion of arrangement within that. The most detailed overview is that of settlement names, which Kálmán discusses categorizing them into three main types—names originating from appellatives, names originating from proper names, and names with religious connotations (e.g., names originating from patrociny names). Within the group of settlement names originating from proper names, he devotes specific attention to settlement names created without a formant and names indicating possession by some formant. He distinguishes between several subtypes of settlement names originating from appellatives: names originating from the ethnonyms and tribe's names, names indicating rights to hold markets, names formed with the *-i* adjectival derivative, names originating from words or word structures denoting land areas, and names originating from words denoting buildings. The typology applied by Kálmán in this chapter is built on earlier typologies, but he does give more detailed discussion of certain groups which previously received less attention from researchers. In addition to the detailed overview

of settlement names, Kálmán also describes the characteristics of hydronyms and oronyms, those of streets and microtoponyms; he mentions the names of countries and provinces, and briefly touches on changes in toponyms and names given in literature as well. Besides the main types of place names, Kálmán also provides explanations of ethnonyms (which are considered to be appellatives in Hungarian), as these words are very characteristic elements in certain types of proper names.

Aiming to provide a work of popular science, Kálmán wrote his book in an easy to read style, without, however, making any compromises on scientific values; he provided an expert's summary on Hungarian and international onomastical knowledge of his time, covering not only the achievements made in the field, but his own research as well. The extremely positive reception of his work can be measured by the fact that it had three further editions. Its English translation (1978a) also provided foreign experts with an introduction into the main types of Hungarian names. The role this volume played—after a forced decline of some two decades—in the renewed development of Hungarian onomastics is indisputable. Its impact was amplified by its being used as a textbook at several universities and colleges in Hungary; there is at least one generation of teachers of Hungarian language and grammar who obtained their onomastic knowledge from this source, and then passed it on to the next generation.

Besides his summarizing work, Kálmán also commented on several other topics of onomastics. In an essay on the relationship between toponomastic research and word geography (1967b) he called attention to the fact that with names being easy to localize, appellatives contained in names are useful means of studying historical word geography. He carried out an in-depth analysis of “irregular” sound changes in toponyms, that is, sound changes based on false linguistic analyses made by speakers, or caused by folk etymology (1967c). He also wrote a few essays discussing issues of socio-onomastics (1978b, 1981). In addition to theoretical works, Kálmán also undertook the publication of a historical onomastic corpus (e.g., 1980). So far as anthroponyms are concerned, he was primarily interested in family names; he analysed the tithe register of Délvidék (the southern territories of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom) from the year 1522 in detail (1961), and studied family names phonologically identical to toponyms in depth (e.g., 1975). His approach was always characterized by an effort to uncover general relationships and to view his research subject within a wider context.

**2.3.** In Hungary, the collection work on contemporary toponymic corpus, started at the end of the 1930s, came to a complete halt after the 1940s, therefore, at the first conference on Hungarian onomastics, held in 1958, Géza

Bárczi announced the creation of a national network for collecting toponyms to be a priority task of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and of the Hungarian Linguistic Society. It was in the 1960s that a well-defined program for the collection of contemporary language toponyms took shape. The launch of a large-scale program for the collection of toponyms may have been most directly motivated by the fact that the foundations of traditional rural lifestyles were being undermined by social changes of the post-war era and the modernization of agriculture, consequently, experts were worried that a toponymic corpus accumulated through centuries might rapidly disappear. The collection of toponyms gained the support of those controlling politics, and, with financing available, research work had opportunities never seen before. Experts decided to carry out the collection work by counties, and one of Csúry's students, József Végh undertook the leadership of the organizing work. The collection work was carried out in two different schemes. In most counties, voluntary field-workers were recruited and were prepared for the task of collecting through courses lasting a few days. Professional control, however, was still exercised by the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, with linguists verifying collected onomastic corpora on the sites, and also editing volumes in which the corpora were published.

Hungarian linguist-educators at the University of Debrecen and the nearby College of Nyíregyháza, on the other hand, chose a different way: they undertook the collection and the publication of the onomastic corpus of the region on the east side of the river Tisza (primarily the counties of Hajdú-Bihar and Szabolcs-Szatmár) themselves. On the editorial board, the University of Debrecen was represented by Árpád Sebestyén and László Jakab, while the representatives from the College of Nyíregyháza were László Bachát and András Mező; they were later joined by Árpád Kálnási from the University of Debrecen, who also made an active contribution. The onomastic corpus of the region was collected by smaller administrative units, called “járás”. Collection was mostly carried out in combination with field practice held for students, who were also required to thoroughly process the collected toponymic corpus in their seminar papers and theses. Using this method, exhaustive toponymic corpora could be compiled, and, as a fringe benefit, well prepared experts of onomastics were also trained. Verification and publication of the collected toponymic corpus was undertaken by the teachers. Eventually, the work resulted in the publication of the first collection of toponyms of the region (András Mező: “Szabolcs-Szatmár megye földrajzi nevei 1. A baktalórántházi járás földrajzi nevei” [The Place Names of Szabolcs-Szatmár County, vol. 1: Toponyms of the District Baktalórántháza]), and—following a relatively long pause—the

publication of four further volumes during the following decades (Kálnási 1984, Jakab–Kálnási 1987, Kálnási 1989, Kálnási–Sebestyén 1993).

The experts from Debrecen and Nyíregyháza intended their volumes not only to be a means of making data available, but also as to be an instrument of educating the general public, thus, their entries are more detailed and easier to read than most of the toponym registries collected from other counties. The published onomastic corpus is organized by settlements. The onomastic corpus of each village is preceded by an introduction of a page or two, which includes first data such as the area of the given settlement, its population, etc., then a brief overview of the settlement's history, and finally the etymology of the name of the settlement, with references to the layman's etymologies heard from the locals. The introduction is followed by the onomastic corpus of the settlement; names of places within the municipality boundaries then names of places outside municipality boundaries (microtoponyms) are arranged into entries in alphabetical order. Besides the generic vernacular form, the entry for each name has data reflecting the pronunciation in the local dialect; contemporary language name forms are supplemented by historical data (the sources of which were the unpublished manuscript of the first national collection of toponyms, created by Frigyes Pesty in 1864, land surveyor's maps from the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and also official registries of settlement names from the same era). The locative case of each name answering the question *where to?* is also indicated. This information is followed by a description of the denotatum, which includes a map. Folk explanations on the given object itself or its name are also recorded, and even though the latter are not evaluated, and no etymologies are provided, the lists of geographical common words included at the end of each volume do help to unravel the structure of toponyms.

From the mid-1980s onwards, due to diminishing social and political support, the national toponym collection movement gradually lost momentum, and by the 1990s, collection work practically came to a complete halt. Approximately three decades of work produced collections of toponyms from half of the entire area of the country. Unfortunately, the staff at the University of Debrecen hasn't managed to accomplish the task they undertook, which was the exploration of the complete toponymic corpus of the region (the collection in the county of Hajdú-Bihar, very little of which had been covered earlier, was restarted in recent years, cf. section 3.1). Even so, the collected onomastic corpus is still significant, and while no comprehensive synthesis of the contemporary language onomastic corpus was created, the results of the toponym-collection work and the experience earned in its course had a very beneficial effect on onomastic research.

**2.4.** On behalf of the University of Debrecen, the collection work was coordinated by one of its students, Árpád Sebestyén, who was taught by Géza Bárczi. The scientific heritage conveyed to him by the department's intellectual atmosphere had a great effect on his career. As a scientific researcher, he became involved in several areas of linguistics, and his pedagogical career was no less colourful. He created the "Általános Nyelvészeti és Fonetikai Tanszék" [Department of General Linguistics and Phonetics] at the University of Debrecen in 1972, and, after the retirement of Prof. István Papp, he became the chair of the Department of Hungarian Linguistics, in which position he served until 1992. An important element in the way he saw language was the tenet that the system and condition of a language can only be really understood by exploring its history and continuous change. He deemed empirical studies the most effective approach, at the same time, he never lost sight of the function of language in his analyses, and when presenting linguistic phenomena in detail, he also took more general relationships into consideration.

The themes of dialects and onomastics were present throughout Sebestyén's entire career. He was still a student when turned his attention to the dialect of his native village, Gacsály; later on, he proceeded to collect and process the complete modern and historical toponymic corpus of the village, located in the county of Szatmár, including even explanations for the origins of each name. His work is an example of how the toponymic corpus of a smaller area should be processed in a complex manner and then published. Relying on the experience he earned in the course of his personal collection work and by participating in the toponym collection movement, he also joined the discussion unfolding about the methodology of collection work (1967, 1986). Sebestyén distinguished between three main phases of collection work. During the preparatory phase, antecedents in the literature and available sources are processed, the map for the collection is prepared, etc. These tasks require the collector of names to have knowledge on dialectology and local history. During the phase of on-site collection, informants must be selected with due care. In Sebestyén's opinion, the persons most familiar with the archaic onomastic corpus are those local elderly villagers who had lands in separate areas, and who had little contact with the onomastic corpus used in official documents. Studying changes and performing name-sociology analysis, on the other hand, requires the involvement of informants from a wider range. Additionally, he also describes the procedure the interviews follow and the methodology of walking over the outer regions of the settlement. The third phase of collection is that of organizing the onomastic corpus, thus readying it for editing the manuscript.



The importance he attributed to examining language phenomena from multiple aspects is well illustrated by his research on postpositions—he explored the typological classification and the historical background of this type, as well as the process of its evolution, its status and network of connections within the Finno-Ugric, Uralic family of languages, and he dedicated separate attention to the group of toponyms with postpositions (1998). In his essays on onomastics, he discussed, among others, issues of the lifespans of various kinds of names, in particular that of microtoponyms, he commented on the semantics of toponyms (1970), and even the orthography of toponyms (1971).

**2.5.** László Jakab, head of the Department of Hungarian Linguistics between 1992 and 1995, and, even though now retired, remains an active member of it to the present day, was yet another graduate of the University of Debrecen to have an important role in the collection of toponyms. While his interests were manifold, Jakab was a historical linguist in the first place; the launch of computer-aided historical linguistic research in Hungary is attributed to him—an achievement that served as a model for later onomastic research work on processing and analysing large onomastic corpora, as well as research on historical linguistics in Hungary in general. The system of collecting names, as presented above, was created by him; he has done a lot to include knowledge on onomastic research in the curriculum for students, primarily through collection work performed as field practice. The district registry of Nyírbátor was also published under his name (Jakab–Kálnási 1987).

**2.6.** Árpád Kálnási, who joined work on the collection of names in the 1970s, undertook to provide a comprehensive presentation of the onomastic corpus found in the name collection for the county of Szatmár (1996). He presented the exceptionally rich onomastic corpus grouped into settlement names, names of places within the municipality boundaries, names of places outside municipality boundaries (mostly microtoponyms), hydronyms, names of farms and names of institutions. His purpose was to examine the processes in which places are given their names in a historical sequence, proceeding towards the present day onomastic corpus. In organizing current usage onomastic corpus, he mostly gave priority to the historical aspect, while he did not intend the structural analysis of names to have a crucial role—even though the latter aspect is present throughout the discussion of all types of names. Geographical common words—organized into word entries—are discussed in great detail in his book, with their history, their meanings, their frequency within names, their relationships in name structures all addressed. His research shows geographical common words used to create names for places outside settlement boundaries to have a particularly long list, there is, however, also a rich corpus of geographical common words found in names of institutions and hydronyms. His

vocabulary analyses prove this stratum of words to have a critical role in the formation of names.

In addition to his comprehensive analytic work, Kálnási also commented on the theoretical issues of onomastic research. In his works on semantics, besides single-name toponyms, he also distinguishes multi-name and distinct-name toponyms. His category of multi-name toponyms consists of names denoting identical objects and having some shared motive in their giving; he defines the relationships between these name forms by their characteristics of pattern. The cases he considers to be distinct-name toponyms are examples of name variations based on different approaches (1980). Taking the hydronyms of Szatmár as an example, he also analysed the differences between the communal vs. the official giving and usage of names (1984–1985). He found official hydronyms to significantly differ not only from those in folk usages, but also from the practices of giving official names to streets, as in this case, barely any names with no motivations behind them can be found.

**2.7.** A significant amount of István Nyirkos's scientific work—conspicuous for its versatility in an era when professional activities were increasingly characterised by specialization and the limited horizons it often entails—also falls into the period discussed here. István Nyirkos started his career engaged in the research of dialects, later on turned his attention towards descriptive and historical linguistics, yet, his work was mainly focused on the research of historical phonology. In his writings, descriptive and historical linguistics are perfectly integrated with each other, and are featured supplementing and explaining each other. When exploring any particular linguistic phenomenon, Nyirkos not only examined how it evolved in the specific history of the Hungarian language, but in most cases also took into consideration the Uralic antecedents of the analysed phenomenon as well.

In parallel with his main research topics, the issues of onomastics accompanied him throughout his entire career, and even though the total number of his onomastic writings is not too high, they do touch upon important problems of methodology and onomastic theory. Topics he discussed include onomastic corpora found on maps (1970), the information content of proper names (1989), the problems of linguistic categorization of proper names (1998), the issue of toponym-density (1993), and morphologically peculiar name creation methods (2008). He was well informed about the achievements of onomastic research in Finland and the Urals, which he also made available to onomasticians in Hungary (1997). In an essay about the morphological characteristics of Finnish toponyms (2009), he even compared the creation of toponyms in the Finnish and the Hungarian languages, uncovering both similarities (the lack of words created by reduplication and the small number

of derivative affixes) and differences (Finnish does have a derivative affix with no other function than the creation of toponyms, but Hungarian does not).

Beyond Hungarian linguistics, István Nyirkos has also made significant contributions to Finno-Ugristics and Fennistics, and in particular, he has done a lot to enhance Hungarian-Finnish cultural ties. Capitalizing on his international scientific connections, he had a definitive role in making the launch of the “*Onomastica Uralica*” series—a new scientific forum for the onomastic research of Uralic languages—possible in the year 2000.

**2.8.** The theme of onomastics is also an element in Ágnes Kornyáné Szoboszlay’s life achievement. At the beginning of her career, she researched the onomastic corpus of her native village, Felsőnyárád. She published the toponyms of the settlement in a separate study (1964), which includes a summary of the customs characteristically followed at the settlement in giving and using names. After that, she published the bynames of the village based on the motivation of the names (1965). Later on, she turned her attention to stylistics, from which angle she also approached onomastic issues: the topic of her interest was names coined by authors of literary works, and she processed the complete onomastic corpus found in the novels and dramas of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Hungarian author, László Németh (1971, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 2002). She was also interested in the issue of anonymity (1999); she thought the phenomenon could be examined both as a stylistic method and as a semantic category.

**2.9.** The “Debrecen School of Onomastics”, which today can boast of a well-deserved good reputation, owes its existence to István Hoffmann, who turned the city into one of the most prominent centres of onomastic research. Hoffmann arrived to the university from Pápa, a city in Western Hungary, and wrote his doctoral thesis on the toponyms of Tapolcafő, a little village near his home town; he provided a comprehensive elaboration of the settlement’s toponymic system (1979, the onomastic corpus was published as an independent dictionary in 2013). During the same period, he also joined the toponym-collection work going on in the region at the time.

His scientific career was defined by his interest in toponyms right from the start. Building on his work with concrete onomastic corpora, he turned his attention to the theory of toponomastics, and his research work became ever more focused on modelling the Hungarian toponymic system and describing its changes. This work culminated in his book titled “*Helynevek nyelvi elemzése*” [Linguistic Analysis of Toponyms] (1993a), which had a huge impact on onomastic research in Hungary.

István Hoffmann's objective was to set up an analytic model well suited for analysing the Hungarian name system, while he also declared his views on a number of name theory issues concerning the evolution of the category of proper names and toponyms. With regards to the theorem of proper names originating from appellatives, he points out that in the case of certain names, false etymologies would be arrived at by invariably presuming an appellative antecedent (e.g., by giving explanations for toponyms of anthroponymic origins based on the eventual appellative etymon of the anthroponym). He also refutes the theory of proper names gradually evolving into names, as in his opinion, every name is given consciously, and new names are created following existing names as models, based on naming schemes. Also, he considers naming schemes relevant not only to the name forms created, but also to the entities of the environment which the names are given to. Through the acquisition and usage of toponyms, every individual person develops their own name-competence, relying upon which they are capable of identifying new linguistic formations as toponyms, and even creating such themselves.

Hoffmann also emphasizes the importance of classification based on types of places, at the same time refuting the earlier view that distinctions between the types of names serve merely practical purposes. This is because the differences between denotata as entities result in differences between the various categories of approaches relevant to them, upon each of which a specific linguistic system is built. In other words, categorization into the appropriate toponymic type is essentially a prerequisite of the linguistic analysis of toponyms. To illustrate his point, he presents the example of the settlement name *Sárospatak* and the hydronym *Sáros-patak*, the semantical and morphological structure, as well as the manner in which they evolved, are clearly determined by being analysed as belonging to the respective types of names (accordingly, the hydronym *Sáros-patak* < *sáros* 'muddy' + *patak* 'brook' is a two-constituent name, while the settlement name *Sárospatak* < the toponym *Sáros-patak*, is a single-constituent toponym). Setting up a typology of places, based upon which types of toponyms can be categorized, does raise problems, however—firstly, because places are not individually segregated entities in space, and secondly, because there are no clear-cut distinctions between the conceptual categories of place-types, indeed, there are several borderline types. Then again, descriptive linguistics is not concerned with the logical order of the types of places, but with the way this system is linguistically reflected in toponyms. With the aforementioned criterion in mind, Hoffmann set up seven main categories: hydronyms, names of waterside places, names of landforms, names of landscapes, names of places outside municipality boundaries (e.g., fields, forests), names of inhabited areas, names of buildings; within which he has several subcategories.

In Hoffmann's toponymic typology—built primarily on the model theory created by Rudolf Šrámek and Eero Kiviniemi—the successful way of outlining the name system is considered to be the combined application of descriptive and historical analysis. The idea underlying descriptive structural analysis is that names are always given in a semantically conscious manner, that is, at their genesis, names reflect certain semantic content. In the process of functional-semantic analysis, which is an element of the structural analysis, linguistic elements within the given name are analysed with respect to the denotative meaning constituting the core meaning of the toponym. The basic concept of the analysis is the name constituent functioning as the segment of the name which provides information about the denotatum. Within the structure of any given name, there can be one or two functional name constituents (e.g., the two name constituents within the name of the hill *Dió-mál* are *dió* 'walnut' and *mál* 'hillside', since the semantic content of the name is 'hillside covered by walnut trees', while the name form *Diómál hegye* is structured as *Diómál* 'name of a hill' + *hegye* 'hill'). The semantic functions of name constituents can be described based on four general types of meanings: besides type-indicating function (*Domb* 'hill'), descriptive function (*Kékes* 'blue coloured') and designating function (*Pilis* as a borrowed name), there are also some cases in which the function is not related to the denotatum. The designating function stems from the referential nature of names, in the mind of the name user, the only content expressed by a name of this type is that 'this is the name of the place in question'; names with this function are mostly loanwords. As another element of the structural analysis, the linguistic elements used to express the semantic content also have to be examined—the categories of these correspond to the categories of the grammar of appellatives. The relationship between the two constituents of two-constituent names can be uncovered by syntagmatic analysis.

The most detailed discussion given by Hoffmann in his book is devoted to exploring the types of name giving methods. Borrowing of names, being an external way of name formation, is dealt with relatively briefly, instead, attention is focused on the internal ways of name formation. Hoffmann examines the phenomena of name formation and name changes in a unified system, distinguishing between syntagmatic, morphemic and semantic name formation, along with names formed by structural changes. Syntagmatic structures are names within which there are two name constituents with a syntagmatic relationship between them (e.g., *nagy* 'big' + *hegy* 'hill' > *Nagy-hegy*); the syntax of such names can be adjectival, adverbial or syndetic. In morphemic structures a linguistic element assumes the function of a proper name by the addition of some formant. In Hungarian—which is an agglutinating language—some of the suffixes and postpositions of appellatives are also used

as topoformants, within which category toponymic derivatives are the most common. The most important innovation of the chapter is that Hoffmann integrated the various cases of semantic name formation into a single category, within which he discussed separately the following: geographical common word > proper name changes, the broadening and the narrowing of meaning, metonymic and metaphoric name creation, name relocation and inductive name creation. With structural changes, a name may become shorter or longer, and they can affect either a name constituent (*Galya* oronym > *Kis-Galya* 'small' + *Galya* oronym) or a single morpheme within the name involved (*Halász* 'fisherman' + *-i* topoformant > *Halászi*). Hoffmann discussed folk etymology and deetymologization also amongst structural changes.

Hoffmann's typology had a great impact on toponomastics in Hungary—beyond his own students, researchers working at other scientific workgroups (Nyíregyháza, Eger, Szombathely, Veszprém, , Budapest) have been using it as a cornerstone of their work to this day. The wide range within which the typology can be applied is well proven by the fact that even though Hoffmann intended it primarily for the description of contemporary microtoponyms, it is still a useful tool for the analysis of historical toponymic corpora. Valéria Tóth analysed the complete toponymic corpus of two counties of the medieval Carpathian Basin based on this model (2001a); Ágnes Béneyi and Gergely Pethő (1998), Rita Póczos (2001), as well as Anita Rácz (2007) applied it as a framework for examining the medieval settlement names of various well defined regions; Erzsébet Gyórfly used the model for a comprehensive analysis of old hydronyms (2011); and Katalin Reszegi for a comprehensive analysis of old oronyms (2010a, 2011). Additionally, research shows the typology—with minor changes—to be applicable to other types of names as well. Tamás Kis discussed a group of words at the periphery of toponymic corpora, i.e., the names of taverns and pubs, using this method (1999), and Krisztina Fehér also used it when analysing bynames (2002, 2003). Sándor Maticsák successfully applied the categories of structural analysis to cataloguing Mordvin settlement names (1995a).

In a later study, Hoffmann returned to the issues of name typology analysis, this time focusing on the general characteristics to present the close link between the aspects of name typology analysis (functional-semantic, lexical-morphological and analysis of the types of name giving methods). As a part of this presentation, he made an attempt to reconstruct the history of how names are created (1999a). The “ancient” or “primary” system of names probably consisted of single-constituent names—all of which either denoted the type of the place (type-indicating function) or denoted a characteristic (descriptive function)—and two-constituent names created by connecting descriptive name

constituent + type-indicating name constituent. In the next phase, already existing names are also used in the creation of new ones, thus, the system is extended with a designating function (e.g., *Kis-Kengyeles* ‘a smaller part of the area known as Kengyeles’), as well as the following combinations: descriptive function + designating function, designating function + type-indicating function.

In addition to scientific research, right from the beginning of his career, Hoffmann has also considered attending to exceptionally talented students of primary importance—dozens of the best students have won prizes at national scientific competitions with him as their dissertation advisor. To facilitate the scientific careers of his students, he undertook a crucial role in organizing the doctoral programme, and has personally led the toponymic subprogram of the Ph.D. programme of Hungarian linguistics between 1995 and 2016. The success of his work as an educator is proven by nine doctoral dissertations defended under his supervision, and the fact that in recent years, many of his students became members of the department themselves. Perhaps his most significant achievement as an educator is the stable workgroup of approximately 10 to 15 members, which, in the last twenty years, has made considerable contributions to raising the scientific prestige of onomastic research in Hungary. His success at activities of this kind has also been helped by the fact that the Department of Hungarian Linguistics was under his leadership between 1995 and 2016. (As from this point onwards Hoffmann’s work is closely integrated into the work of the research group, an overview of this phase of his career will be given in the next chapter.)

**2.6.** Sándor Maticsák is a scholar of Finno-Ugristics, amongst whose scientific interests onomastic research is also a prominent feature; applying Hoffmann’s typology, he studied the settlement names of the Republic of Mordovia in depth (1995a). Linguistic conditions in the Middle Volga Region are fairly complex; during its history of four thousand years, it has been inhabited by a number of ethnic groups, traces of whose languages can be found in toponyms. The place-names and the river-names in this region belong to Volga-Oka population, Baltic, early Iranian, Turkic-Tatar, Mordvinian and Russian tribes. The main body of the study is comprised of the exploration of these etymological strata. In addition, the various suffixes, prefixes, infixes, and compounding methods used to create toponyms are analysed in the study in detail. In this manner, an attempt is made to define the topoformant, and the relationship between the stem and the topoformant is also described (e.g., Mordvinian stem and Russian topoformant).

Maticsák also discusses the relationships between anthroponyms and toponyms in several of his works (1991, 1997b, 1999) and raises socio-

onomastic issues in a study on official and non-official Mordvin settlement names (1995c). Besides settlement names, he also examined characteristic types of name giving methods of Mordvin hydronyms (2002), and introduced Hungarian onomasticians to the Mordvin anthroponym system (1997b, 2013). Beyond his onomastic research, Maticsák also played an important role in organizing the shared forums for onomasticians of the Uralic languages, organized onomastic symposia at congresses held on Finno-Ugristic onomastics, and is on the editorial board of the periodical “Onomastica Uralica”.

**2.7.** Tamás Kis started his career engaged in the research of a peripheral group of proper names, i.e., examining the structure and the name giving methods of names of taverns and pubs (1988, 1993–1994, 1999). Later on, his attention turned towards the field of slang and sociolinguistics. As a part of his main research topic he also dealt with the problems of slang names, and attempted to define the term slang name itself (1996, 1999). Additionally, besides István Hoffmann, he contributed in publishing the toponymic corpus of Bihar County collected by Frigyes Pesty in 1864 (1996–1998).



### **3. The Doctoral School and Research Group on Onomastics (1995-present)**

**3.1.** Hungarian onomastic research of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was characterized by its orientation towards historical linguistics, which is the very reason why Bálint Csúry's approach, being focused on current language usage, meant a completely new trend at the time. During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on the other hand—with the collection of a current language usage onomastic corpus in progress—a reverse trend could be observed; involvement with contemporary onomastic corpora dominated, and the onomastic research work done by the researchers of Debrecen was no exception. At the same time, however, thanks to historians, more and more primary sources were published, therefore, in the light of the newly available, vastly enhanced historical onomastic corpus, it was not only possible, but also necessary to review of the outdated knowledge on and theories of historical onomastics, more than half a century old. Recognizing these opportunities and requirements, in the mid-1990s, István Hoffmann and his students focused their attention on the medieval Hungarian toponymic corpus. Most of the exceptionally rich onomastic corpus had not been processed from a linguistic point of view, while on the other hand, at the time, it was already possible to confidently rely on modern linguistic technologies in carrying out this work. Yet, the implementation of linguistic processing also required well-trained experts, in which regard the doctoral school, formed in 1995, meant a huge step forward by making it possible for dedicated young experts to join the educational and research work at the department within an organized framework. The research group formed with them as its members—and financed from successful tenders—opened up the possibility of launching and conducting larger-scale, shared projects going beyond achievements made by individual researchers.

To promote the development of historical onomastic research, the Debrecen researchers, with Hoffmann as their leader, launched two series of handbooks. The series titled “Helynévtörténeti adatok a korai ómagyar korból” [Data on Toponymic History from the Early Old Hungarian era] (Hoffmann–Rácz–Tóth 1997–2017), based on the historical geographical atlas by György Györffy (“Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza” [Historical Geography of Hungary in the Age of the Árpád Dynasty]), includes the microtoponyms of medieval Hungarian counties organized into word entries. Thus, the microtoponyms of approximately two-thirds of the area of medieval Hungary are easily accessible.

The 4<sup>th</sup> volume of the series was published in 2017. The series “Korai magyar helynévszótár” [A Dictionary of Early Hungarian Toponyms] includes the complete onomastic corpus of the era between 1000 and 1350, as found in the available primary sources (ed. Hoffmann, 2015), work on the second and further volumes of the series is currently in progress.

The long-term objective of activities aimed at medieval toponyms is the creation of a digitally available archive of historical toponyms. This is justified by the fact that digitally available datasets, on which various queries can be run, have the significant advantage of simplifying and accelerating research work, while also enabling the application of new aspects of evaluation. To facilitate scientific research work, the electronic version of the onomastic archive, continuously updated with names processed by linguists, has been available as “Magyar Névéchívum” [Hungarian Name Archives] since 1998. Many of the members of the Debrecen research group perform their personal research work relying on the onomastic corpus compiled in this manner; the works in which the medieval corpus is processed are published in the series “A Magyar Névéchívum Kiadványai” [Publications of the Hungarian Name Archives], edited by István Hoffmann. During the two decades since the launch of the series, a total of 43 volumes have been published.

In the 2010s, another long term project was started with the participation of members of the research group; in order to resume the stalled work of collecting and publishing the national onomastic corpus, the “Magyar Digitális Helynévtár” [Hungarian Digital Toponym Registry] was created with the aim of eventually amassing a database covering the entire Carpathian Basin. In the first phase of the project, digitalization of the corpus contained in the county registries published already was started, and later on, in parallel, current language usage collection work was initiated to compile the toponymic corpus of the county of Hajdú-Bihar, within which Debrecen is located—as the exploration of the onomastic corpus of the county had not been completed at the time of the national collection of toponyms. The volume containing the onomastic corpus of the area to the north of Debrecen, edited by Barbara Bába, was published in 2015, collection in other regions of the county are currently in progress. Beyond the professionals, this series is intended to cater for the interested wider public as well, therefore, it contains the names and the relevant information in an easy to read form, organized into word entries. Under each entry, both historical information and the current language usage data collected in the 2010s may be found, as well as the type and the location of the object denoted by the name in question, and the information explaining the creation of the name. The places denoted by the names are presented using several illustrations, photos and aerial images, on some of which the places can be seen in their present day condition, and others in their earlier condition.

During the last twenty years, the Debrecen onomastic workgroup has won several research tenders, and, for a term of five years, starting from 1 July 2013, it operates as the affiliated research group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences under the name “Magyar Nyelv- és Névtörténeti Kutatócsoport” [Research Group on Hungarian Language History and Toponomastics].

Hoffmann also had an important role in the creation of new fora for onomastic research. He was one of the initiators of the international research program intended to promote cooperation between onomasticians of the Uralic languages under the leadership of István Nyirkos. In the framework of this program, an international periodical, titled “Onomastica Uralica” was launched, which has had a total of 10 volumes since the year 2000.

In addition, more than a decade ago Hoffmann, together with Valéria Tóth—launched the “Helynévtörténeti szeminárium” [Seminar in Historical Toponomastics]. The annually held event serves as a new kind of forum for the representatives of various scientific disciplines (history, archaeology, historical geography, ethnography and historical toponomastics). During the four-day seminar, experts of the various scientific fields present their fully developed or in-formation theories or research projects in a manner more casual than that of conference-lectures, and can benefit from each other’s opinions in spontaneous scientific debate. The event boosts the close ties the onomasticians of Debrecen have had with experts from Budapest, other cities of Hungary and from over the borders of the country for quite a long time now.

Realizing the interdisciplinary nature of onomastics, Hoffmann and Tóth have also created a forum under the title “Helynévtörténeti Tanulmányok” [Studies in Historical Toponomastics], which provides representatives of various branches of science engaged in the history of toponyms with a venue for publishing their work. This peer-reviewed journal contains primarily studies analysing present day and former toponyms of the Carpathian Basin; thus far, it has 13 published volumes.

**3.2.** Historical topics have also been continuously gaining prominence in Hoffmann’s personal research career. In a 2003 monograph published under the title “Magyar helynévkutatás 1958–2002” [Toponomastic Research in Hungary, 1958–2002], he summarized the history of the science of toponomastics in a very thorough, reference book style. The achievements of toponomastic research are presented under topics, such as the scientific environment of toponomastics, general onomastics, the collection of toponyms, historical toponomastic research, toponym-geography, socio-onomastics, applied toponomastics, with tasks denominated as important for the future of the scientific field but as yet unaccomplished. (Since the book was published, more than ten years ago; an overview of the achievements in Hungarian historical toponomastics during that period has been outlined by Valéria Tóth, 2015a.)

The oldest authentic Hungarian charter that had been preserved in its original form, i.e., the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany, reached its 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005, and on this occasion, amongst other researchers, Hoffmann turned his attention to this primary source. His interest was all the more substantiated by the fact that since Géza Bárczi's work in 1951, referenced above, no one had undertaken to assess the charter, even though with half a century of developments in the theory and the methodology of onomastic research, doing so had become overdue. Hoffmann evaluated the charter as a source of the history of the Hungarian language, and analysed its elements. The results written initially in a number of studies (inter alia 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006a, 2006b), later became the subject of his academic doctoral thesis ("A Tihanyi alapítólevél mint helynévtörténeti forrás" [The Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany as a Source on Toponymic History], 2007a), which he defended in 2007.

In the first part of the thesis, he presents the relationship between Latin language charters and words of the Hungarian (and/or other) language(s) found in them, thus providing a comprehensive overview of the charter-writing practices of the era, as well as the consequences which the latter have with regards to the usefulness of toponyms in historical linguistics and ethnology. He comes to the conclusion that vernacular elements were included in the document on the one hand to ensure entitlements, while on the other, in compliance with existing charter-writing practices of the time (a certain kind of adherence to norms). Occasionally, however, the peculiar language psychology situation which the scribes were in when recording the charter (they had to continuously move back and forth between two languages) may also have resulted in the inclusion of vernacular language elements in the text. Most of these forms probably reflected local language usage, but the impact of the scribe's native language also has to be reckoned with.

Upon these grounds, Hoffmann presents how—in the light of modern onomastic knowledge—toponyms can be put to use in studies exploring the linguistic-ethnic conditions of the earliest phase of Hungarian statehood. He developed the so-called "linguistic reconstruction for ethnic purposes" method, the essence of which is not to focus exclusively on the etymology of a toponym, as that would provide information only on the circumstances under which the particular name was created, but instead, to trace the occurrences and the data series of the toponym all the way through, because the features characterizing the way in which names in general were used at the time of the recording are reflected in the phonological, phonotactical and morphological peculiarities of these forms. Additionally, since the Hungarian language elements of any single charter may shed light on each other, the analysis has to cover data as elements

of the charter as well. Furthermore, it is important to find the link with later, and, in some cases, also earlier instances upon which the denotatum of the given name is mentioned by identifying it.

Hoffmann claims that when drawing linguistic-ethnic conclusions, further factors have to be taken into consideration as well. The prestige hierarchy of languages has a fundamental impact on the nature (direction and scale) of loaning words, and also on what items from the onomastic corpus of a multi-language area will be entered into charters. Toponyms from peripheral languages (such as Slavic, Romanian and Turkic languages in medieval Hungary) will be entered into charters only in areas where normally no other language was in use. The role old toponymic data play as identifiers in historical linguistics, identifiers of language and ethnicity will also be determined by the type of the place they denote. In Hoffmann's opinion, it is imperative to make a distinction between the scenarios in which objects of the natural environment, and those in which man-made objects and places are given names; he argues that the creation and the usage of the former are mainly determined by linguistic-communicational needs, while in the case of cultural names, social motives also play a role in the name giving.

The second main unit of the thesis, the linguistic-onomastic assessment of the vernacular language elements contained by the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany, was also published as a separate volume in 2010. The volume raised awareness about the necessity of processing the earliest, and thus, for the Hungarian language, extremely important charters in a comprehensive manner, and also served as a good model for accomplishing the task.

Besides historical toponomastics, Hoffmann also addressed issues related to anthroponyms (2008a, cf. Hoffmann–Tóth 2015a). Not only Hungarian, but also international researchers of anthroponyms experience difficulties in categorizing anthroponyms and applying a terminology to them. To resolve this issue, Hoffmann—focusing on the cognitive and the pragmatic aspects of giving and using names—developed a typological framework, which he intended to be applicable to the widest possible scope of languages, and also convenient for the purposes of historical studies. Based on the premise that proper names usually assume their roles as actual unique identifiers through some sort of a name giving act, he distinguishes between three types of anthroponyms. In the most obvious type of name-giving situations, the name to be conferred on the denotatum will be selected from a defined set or a list of names (selected name or list name; from the functional aspect, referring name), as it is the usual manner of giving first names. Names given this way are always given consciously, accordingly, the procedure is tied to certain persons. Another type of names is automatically attached to their denotata; for example, in European

countries, the attribution of a particular family name to a particular person is provided for by legislations, while in other regions, under different circumstances, such usage of names is or was simply required by unwritten laws. Such an automatic or transferred name (from the functional aspect, nexus name) will—within a given social environment—become the name of a person essentially independently from their own will, in accordance with the communal requirements on giving names involved. The creation of the elements within the third type of names is not limited by any existing set of names, but instead, those who give them to someone else can choose from the entire lexicon (including proper names), or can even create a previously non-existent series of sounds and use that as a name—this is the manner in which so-called bynames, for example, earn their status as names. In the case of names chosen in this manner, the linguistic creativity of the individual person—i.e., the person who gives the name—has an important role, therefore, Hoffmann applies the term created name (from the functional aspect, descriptive name) to this type of name, underlining that it is the coining of this type of names that has the most complex cognitive processes behind it. Besides the three main types, Hoffmann also distinguishes a fourth type, which, compared to the other three, is both of a secondary degree and special, i.e., the type of names expressing an emotional relationship between the name-giver and the name-user (affective name, modified name).

Hoffmann's exceptionally versatile accomplishments in the field of onomastics also touch upon general issues of names, such as the issue of the meanings carried by names (2014), and the relationships between name and identity (2010b). Last, but not least, is his essay on the theoretical linguistic background of this field of science (2012a). Hungarian onomastic research—as Hoffmann points out—has essentially been shaped by the functional approach to studying language right from the beginnings, even though this school of linguistic thought is not explicitly indicated in specific works on onomastics—as a matter of fact, there had already been quite significant achievements in onomastics well before this approach existed as a consistent theory. The functional approach of the vast majority of works on onomastics is verified by adherence to several theoretical principles: onomastic research relies exclusively on data from actual language use, and empirical explorations have a definitive role, yet, they are carried out for the purpose of generalization, with specific typological interests; in analytics, the relationships between functional and formal components of linguistic elements are given emphasis, and explanations are given with non-linguistic factors as well.

Beyond his scientific research work, Hoffmann also worked at passing modern onomastic knowledge on to historians. Without any doubt, it is not only

his lectures held at fora for historians that had a considerable impact, but also the comprehensive thesis he co-wrote with Valéria Tóth, titled “A nyelvi és az etnikai rekonstrukció kérdései a 11. századi Kárpát-medencében” [Issues of Linguistic and Ethnic Reconstruction in the Carpathian Basin of the 11<sup>th</sup> Century] (2016), in which the authors re-assessed earlier theories on the value of toponyms and anthroponyms as primary sources, and also presented in which fields, in what ways—based on current knowledge—these two types of names can be useful to the research of the history of settlements and ethnology.

**3.3.** The high standard of the onomastic subprogram held at the doctoral school is evidenced by the fact that after finishing the program, most of the students continue their scientific careers as teachers at the department and members of the research group, with a smaller proportion continuing their research work at other institutions. Members of the group are mostly engaged in historical toponomastics, and it is also true for almost all of them that—in line with the profile of the forming group—they started their careers doing typological analysis of the historical toponymic corpus. The stance they developed by dealing with names in this manner later saw them through their scientific careers, thus integrating the research work carried out by individual researchers—branching out into ever more directions—into a single framework.

The first students to participate in the onomastic subprogram held at the doctoral school were Valéria Tóth and Anita Rácz, both of whom have since become influential members of the research group as well as in the department. In her doctoral dissertation (1998a), Tóth processed the complete onomastic corpus of two medieval counties (the comitats of Abaúj and Bars), beyond the historical-etymological dictionary of the names (published as a book in 2001, 2001a) also providing a systematic, comprehensive analysis of the entire corpus based on the Hoffmann-method (2001b). The first chapter of her work is an insightful historical scientific overview of previous knowledge on the creation of toponyms during the first four centuries after the arrival of Hungarian tribes into the Carpathian Basin. The overview begins with the presentation of what is known about the name-giving habits of Hungarians before the era to be discussed, which is followed by details of deductions drawn from toponyms on the location of ethnic groups the Hungarians found in the Carpathian Basin upon their arrival. Further on, knowledge and theories on the name giving habits of the Hungarian tribes are introduced by toponym types, with typological statements on the various types of settlement names discussed in particular detail and with a critical eye. Such an approach is necessitated by the fact that these name types had previously been attributed a significant role in chronological categorization. According to these earlier theories, toponyms of certain types—e.g., settlement names created from anthroponyms without

formants and settlement names created using the *-i*, *-d* derivative suffix—could only be dated to a limited chronological period, therefore, based on the name form, conclusions could be drawn as to the time a name was given or a settlement came to be. Tóth offers detailed arguments to justify why, based on present day knowledge, such a typology is groundless. In the second unit of her work, relying on the toponyms of the two counties as primary sources, the author outlines the main characteristics of the phonological conditions of the Old Hungarian language.

The third part, which amounts to approximately one half of the entire work, contains the comparative typological analysis of the toponyms of the two counties. The guiding principle applied to the structural analysis is the functional-semantic approach, in relation to which the author indicates what linguistic elements express individual functions within the name constituents. The analysis concludes with a chronological summary, which demonstrates that single-constituent names dominate the entire period, with a gradually decreasing ratio, and with two thirds of them having designating functions or references to owners. In the course of examining another aspect of name typology analysis, i.e., the analysis of name giving methods, Tóth further refines the categories of the Hoffmann model. This chapter concludes with the chronological characteristics of each way of giving names; 75% to 80% of single-constituent names were created by using toponymic derivatives, metonymy and transonymization, while up to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, two-constituent names were exclusively coined by syntagmatic creation (with almost all of them being adjectival structures), later on, however, a large number of names was created by the addition of geographical common words and adjectival prefixes. The name typology analysis ends in the onomatogeographical analysis of the onomastic corpus of the two counties. The purpose of such studies is to chart the layout of the regional conditions and the prevalence of toponyms, in other words, the borders of historical onomastic dialects.

Tóth's next book-length work, published in 2008, is a recapitulation of her earlier essays (e.g., 2005a, 2005b, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c), thus providing a systematic summary on the changes of settlement names. The starting point of the author's line of thought is the premise that toponyms—similarly to common names—can be defined as a relationship between two components, name form and meaning. Consequently, the changes in the name form can be described as a modification in lexical-morphological (and, occasionally, a related functional-semantic) structure, while the modification of meaning can be described as denotative meaning modification.

Based on the above, Tóth distinguishes between three main types of changes concerning settlement names. In complex processes, denotative meaning and



form undergo parallel changes; the subcategories of this category are name disappearance (*Salamon* >  $\emptyset$ ), name differentiation (*Apáti* > *Kisapáti*, *Nagyapáti*), and name integration (*Szurdok* + *Bénye* > *Szurdokbénye*). In the category of changes of meaning, denotative meaning changes, the name form, however, remains exactly the same; within this category, the author distinguishes between three subcategories: extension of meaning (*Debrecen 1.* ‘smaller settlement unit’ > *Debrecen 2.* ‘larger settlement unit’), revaluation of meaning (*Bánk* ‘independent settlement’ > *Bánk* ‘part of a settlement’) and narrowing of meaning (*Győr(vár) 1.* ‘larger settlement unit’ > *Győr(vár) 2.* ‘smaller settlement unit’). Morphological changes occur when the form of a name changes, but its denotative meaning remains the same. A morphological change may affect the whole name (complete change or name replacement: *Disznó* ‘swine’ > *Apáti* ‘abbot’ + *-i* topoformant) or only a part of it. One group of partial changes can be described by rules, such as changes of the syntactic structure (*Óvár* ‘old castle’ > *Nagy/óvár* ‘big old castle’, *Péter/laka* ‘Péter’s home’ > *Laka*), and changes of the morphological structure (*Hodosd*, *hód* ‘beaver’ + *-d* topoformant > *Hodos*; *Halász* ‘fisherman’ + *-i* topoformant > *Halászi*; *Nyárágy*, *nyár* ‘poplar’ + *-gy* topoformant > *Nyárád*, *-d* topoformant). Amongst ruleless morphological changes, cases in which the lexical-morphological structure and the semantic profile of the primary name form become obscure are discussed as desamentizations (*Szentmária* ‘Saint Mary’ > *Somorja* opaque name form), processes in which the primary opaque form of a name becomes lexically-morphologically and semantically identifiable are discussed as resemantizations (*Vircsolog* opaque name form > *Vércsorog* ‘blood trickling’), while processes in which a both lexically and semantically transparent name structure turns into another lexical-morphological and semantic structure through phonological associations are discussed as transsemantizations (*Vármező* ‘castle + field’ > *Vérmező* ‘blood + field’).

The type of Hungarian settlement names of patrociny origins was also dealt with by Tóth in depth (2006). As during the Middle Ages this type of name appeared in several parts of Europe, a shared research project was started with the participation of twelve well-known experts on the topic from different European countries, so that we could get a comprehensive image of the birth and the spread of this unique group of settlement names. The results of the research project were collected into an English language book, edited by Tóth and published as the 8<sup>th</sup> volume of *Onomastica Uralica* (2011).

Besides toponyms, anthroponyms also form an ancient group of names. Conclusions arrived at through the onomastic study of these names can also be useful for the science of history. During the last few decades, with Hungarian linguistic research making relatively few comments on person-denoting

structures, and in particular, anthroponymic data found in primary sources, historians, when using anthroponymic data, often had no other choice than to rely on results of linguistics which were more often than not outdated and obsolete.

Realizing this state of affairs, Tóth turned her attention to old anthroponyms and the relationship between the system of anthroponyms and that of toponyms—the topic on which she wrote her academic doctoral thesis (2014a), leading to her being awarded the “Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences” in 2016. In the first part of the thesis, she gives a presentation of the medieval system of anthroponyms, the possible distinctions between different kinds of names and their historical evolution, based on previous literature on the subject and her own research. In the course of the latter, she also developed the analytical framework which—organically fitting in with Hoffmann’s typology, already in general use—made it possible to explore the typological relationships between the system of anthroponyms and that of toponyms. Especially large scope is given in the thesis to general onomastic issues of anthroponyms, since in order to establish the name usage value of anthroponymic data in real, spoken language, conclusions of a cognitive-pragmatic nature drawn on the way anthroponyms were given and used also should be taken into consideration. This unit of the thesis was published as a separate volume (2016a) in 2016. In the second part of the dissertation, Tóth discusses the types of toponyms containing anthroponymic lexemes (this overview was also published as a separate volume in 2017).

Beyond scientific research work Valéria Tóth—just like her mentor, István Hoffmann—considers talent management also important; thus far, there have been six candidates successfully awarded doctoral degrees under her supervision, several of whom are now continuing their research work as teachers at the department or members of the research group. Since 2016, she has been the secretary of the sub-programme of the Doctoral School in Hungarian Linguistics. During the last decade, several scientific tender projects have been carried out under her leadership.

**3.4.** Anita Rác’s research works can be grouped into two larger sets of issues. Formerly, she studied the circumstances under which Old Hungarian settlement names of the county of Bihar came to be and evolved (the volume summarizing this work was published in 2005, 2005a). The time interval covered in her study was longer than that of comparable works—she analysed the onomastic corpus up to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the county—the one with the largest territory in medieval Hungary—a total of 500 settlements was established, and, besides Hungarians, it also had Székely, Turkic, Slavic and Romanian ethnic populations. The diversity of the population of the county is

also reflected in its settlement names. Previously, the generally accepted view in historical linguistic circles was that the Hungarian tribes arriving to the Carpathian Basin spoke a homogeneous language. According to present opinion, however, dialects of the Hungarian language already existed upon arrival to the Carpathian Basin. Building upon this premise, Rácz analyses the settlement names of the medieval Bihar County from a historical phonological aspect. This is followed by a typological analysis of the onomastic corpus, based on Hoffmann's typology. Later, Rácz also compiled an etymological dictionary of the settlement names of the Bihar County (2007a).

She then turned her attention to toponyms originating from tribe's names (2006, 2007b), and then studied toponyms with ethnonymic origins in depth (cf. 2005b, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2013a). The names of the Hungarian tribes are known from works by the 10<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine emperor, Constantine VII. This work has the names of seven Hungarian tribes (*Nyék, Megyer, Kürtgyarmat, Tarján, Jenő, Kér, Keszi*). In her studies on toponyms originating from tribes' names, Rácz found their type to form a closed group with regards to their structure, and also to have survived in unchanged forms from the earliest times, that is, she found that linguistic change does not characterize them. In this respect, this type of name is similar to that of loanwords. In Rácz's opinion, this behaviour is explained by the fact that the memory of the tribes probably disappeared from the collective consciousness of Hungarians rather soon (tribes are not mentioned in any of the later written sources), and with the tribes, their names become irrelevant as well. Therefore, those who used settlement names formed from tribe's names did not associate them with the former tribes any longer, that is, the names were used as opaque linguistic elements with purely denotative meanings.

Besides toponyms of foreign language origins, Hungarian language place names containing ethnonymic lexemes are also an important means of assessing the linguistic-ethnic composition of the medieval Carpathian Basin. The topic was studied by excellent linguists in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the research methods, principles and concepts applied at the time have, however, become outdated, not to mention that today, there are more and better primary sources available to researchers. With the primary sources available to archaeologists and historians on the Hungarian tribes settling down in the Carpathian Basin being insufficient, and there being a high number of unanswered questions on the linguistic-ethnic conditions of the era, there is an increasing demand from historians for re-processing the onomastic corpus all over again.

Rácz took it upon herself to accomplish this task: she collected and organized all of the old settlement names containing ethnonyms right from the

earliest times, which is when the Hungarian tribes arrived to the Carpathian Basin, up to 1526 (2011a). In the next phase of the processing work, she subjected the settlement names with ethnonymic origins to a multi-faceted evaluation, which resulted in an assessment of the onomastic corpus compliant with the standards of theory (2016a). Previously, Hungarian literature on history and archaeology attributed direct ethnonymic origins to any settlement name phonologically identical to an ethnonym. These days, in contrast, experts are increasingly of the opinion that not every settlement name based on some ethnonym should be interpreted in this manner; the case may be that an ethnonym first became an anthroponym, and the toponym was formed from the latter, usually to express ownership. Beyond answering theoretical questions, she also thought it important to answer questions of name typology such as what the structure of toponyms containing ethnonyms is like, and what changes these names go through. A chronological analysis of the early types of toponyms has indicated significant chronological differences between the structural types of toponyms with ethnonymic origins; toponyms created from ethnonyms without formants or with derivatives are far older than two-constituent names including ethnonyms.

RÁCZ'S studies comparing the linguistic features and structural types of toponyms containing the names of social groups (tribe's names, ethnonyms, names of occupations) have also produced results significant for historical linguistics and history both from a theoretical and a methodological perspective. By applying a relative chronology based on comparisons between the various structural types of the three name clusters, she also reviewed several stances on name typology, thereby clarifying knowledge of the given name types (their chronological features, name-typological relations, etc.) (2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d). The group of toponyms created from the names of tribes without formants, for example, was previously considered to be among the earliest names in the literature. Trends in the numbers of settlement names originating from the names of tribes, however, are identical to those of ethnonymic and patrociny origins (their proportion is the largest in charters from the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but they also have a high rate of occurrence in the second half of the same century and even in the 15<sup>th</sup> century). Therefore, the first occurrences of names of tribes in toponyms allow for the conclusion that these names have no specific chronological values.

**3.5.** In their essay written while they were still students, Ágnes Bényei and Gergely Pethő analysed the settlement names of the medieval county of Győr (located in the Western part of the Carpathian Basin), based on the Hoffmann model. Their work, improving on the original analytic model in several details, has also been published in a book (1998).

Bényei continued her career in onomastic research, turning her attention to a particular way settlement names are created, i.e., name formation with name formants (2010a). The volume summarizing her research on the topic was published in 2012. During the first three centuries of Hungarian statehood, an estimated 12% of the complete onomastic corpus was comprised of names created using name formants. Prior to analysing the corpus, Bényei elaborates on the theoretical issues relevant to the name-giving with nameformants. There is no definite answer to the question whether the function of formants found in toponyms is identical to that of their morphologically identical counterparts in appellatives. Bényei takes the position that in a toponym, the formant has a specific role, which is to indicate a kind of status as a proper name. In her opinion, this is what obviously has to be reckoned with in the following three cases. 1. In the largest part of toponyms containing formants, the derivational suffix had a role in the creation of the toponym itself, in other words, in these cases, the function of the formant is to change an appellative or a lexeme of some other kind into a proper name, to make the toponymic status unequivocal (*olasz* 'Italian' + *-i* topoformant > *Olaszi*). 2. There is also a high number of names which were created from an already existing toponym by a derivational suffix (a formant) that was analogically added to the previous toponym (*Hegyes* settlement name + *-d* topoformant > *Hegyesd*). 3. The third type of case in which there are reasonable grounds to presume a special topoformant function is that of word stems with alternating derivational suffixes (*Oroszi* 'Russian' + *-i* ~ *Oroszd* 'Russian' + *-d*). In the second larger unit of her book, she examines what derivational elements have roles in the genesis of toponyms, and for each individual derivational suffix, she also details the role it plays in the formation of toponyms, its history, and its functional and chronological bearings.

**3.6.** Rita Póczos also started her scientific career with the typological analysis of medieval toponyms, more particularly, the settlement names of the counties of Bodrog and Borsod. The volume in which she published her results (2001) contains both an etymological dictionary of the settlement names of the two counties (which are located relatively far from each other), and the comparative analysis of the onomastic corpus.

Later on, Póczos endeavoured to uncover the effects interactions between languages can have on toponymic systems. To do so, she attempted to develop a methodology and a framework of description with which name-users of bygone ages can be determined based on toponymic corpora. Based on the premise that the linguistic processes of antiquity are probably similar to those taking place in our time, present day linguistic processes can be projected back onto times gone by. She therefore analysed the current usage Hungarian and the current usage German toponymic corpus of a territory in Southern Hungary (in county of

Baranya), looking for characteristic regularities and systematic relationships (2008a).

First, she looked for the motives driving those who created the names, then she wrote up a tally of the methods used to create the names. Next, she examined the relationships between the toponyms of each pair (with one member from each of the two languages), and she found that generally, there is a semantic correspondence between the two: complete semantic matches are the most frequent ones, the number of name pairs with a partial match between the two members, as well as that of loanwords is far smaller, and finally, name pairs with no discernible semantic connection between the two members are the least characteristic of the system. The aforementioned lead to the conclusion that in bilingual regions the different language's onomatosystems are not independent from each other even when the name users apply the toponyms separately, connected to one of the languages.

In the light of her investigations, Póczos took a position on the unsettled issue of the genesis of Hungarian and other language toponym pairs: rather than parallel and mutually independent name giving, since she consider translations a more realistic explanation. Finally, relying on the relationships she uncovered by investigating a present day toponymic system, she analysed the medieval onomastic corpus of the county of Borsod, which she had previously already processed. By doing so, she intended to learn the kind of population the presence of which in the area could be proven based on onomastic data, and also the changes detectable in the onomastic corpus under investigation, with the investigation limited to given time intervals. The volume summarizing her research was published in 2010.

Additionally, Póczos also discussed issues related to old hydronyms in several essays, analysed the hydronymic systems of the drainage basins of several rivers, separating the various etymological strata from each other (2003a, 2004). Furthermore, she touched upon theories concerning Indo-European hydronyms (2016). In recent years, she even joined the work on the linguistic analysis of the toponymic corpus of 11<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian charters, and deals with the linguistic analysis of Hungarian toponyms included in the Founding Charter of the Diocese of Pécs in several of her essays (cf. 2015).

**3.7.** Judit Szilvia Várnai, following her essays of onomastic typology analyses (2000, 2001) earned her doctoral degree with a doctoral dissertation on onomastic theory (2003a, the book based on the dissertation was published in 2005 in Budapest). Focusing on Hungarian literature addressing onomastic theory, she examined the meaning and the grammatical behaviour of proper names, as well as their position within the language and the linguistic categorization of proper names. As formal definitions and typologies will not

bring about any tangible results, she came to the conclusion that names should not be examined as a formal system or with a formalistic approach. Instead, she proposed another approach, incompatible with modern scientific principles, namely, the so-called translogical approach, as translogical thinking is manifested in several phenomena. This thinking, characterized by a disregard for cause-effect relationships, is reflected, for example, in onomastic wizardry and taboos, and is also observable in a certain phase of language development, when children consider names as the integral part of things.

**3.8.** The subject matter of Magdolna Nemes' doctoral thesis were present-day geographical common words. She first compiled a corpus of geographical common words, then subjected the corpus to linguistic (semantical, lexical) analysis. She found that a significant proportion of geographical common words were formed in a metaphoric manner, from words denoting body parts, with the proportion of geographical common words created through metonymic transonymization being similarly high. She also examined the kinds of derivatives and compounding applied to create new geographical common words, and whether or not there are any differences between these solutions by territories (2005). The dictionary of modern word corpus, attached to the essay as an appendix, was later processed into a book by Barbara Bába, thus becoming an important source for the analysis of both modern and historical toponyms (Bába–Nemes 2014).

**3.9.** Judit Takács chose anthroponym-to-appellative transformations as her doctoral research subject (2003a). In a volume based on her dissertation (2007), she endeavoured to develop a model of proper-name-to-appellative transformations valid to every language and every kind of proper names. She wrote up a tally of the factors determining the processes of proper-name-to-appellative transformations, then presented the most typical features of these processes using the examples of 28 Hungarian male and female personal names. She points out that the change occurs at the level of communication; the appellative meaning is formed by a combination of the situation, the context and the pre-existing knowledge of speakers. Within the group of anthroponyms, it is names that have been elements of the language the earliest and are most commonly used that undergo the process in the largest proportion. In this respect, it is not only how popular a particular name is that matters, but also its proportion within the entire population, as shown by the fact that most of the names appearing from the 1970s onwards have not become appellatives. Superstitions and folk traditions can also contribute to a name's transformation into an appellative. It is an important finding of the author that the process is not limited to any particular stratum of language; the corpus she compiled from various strata (vernacular, folk dialects, slang) proves that a transformation into an appellative can occur in any of them.

In a later study, Takács made yet another important observation with which she contributed to the interpretation of the transformations of anthroponyms into appellatives. Due to “supplementary” pieces of information attributed to them, anthroponyms function in the speakers’ mental systems as special representation codes (i.e., similarly to visually processable external traits of other persons), that is, a name will contribute to the total of the opinions and impressions formed of its bearer. This fact actually explains why it is this kind of names that is involved in proper name > appellative transformations in the greatest number (2008a).

**3.10.** Katalin Reszegi’s research work was initially focused on medieval oronyms. The book summarizing her results on the topic was published in 2011. Her research covered every proper name denoting an object considered to be hill. She gives a detailed overview of orographic appellatives, taking into consideration their etymological, semantical and word geographical aspects, even mentioning how often they occur as name-forming constituents. In the main body of her thesis, she provides a typological analysis of oronyms, first based on their semantic content and lexical-morphological structure, then examined the types of name giving methods. A typological analysis of toponyms can also be useful for demographic history—to illustrate she presents the linguistic-chronological layers of two medieval oronymic corpora of two ranges of hills, both of which are located in the Northern part of the Carpathian Basin, not far from one another.

In the last few years, Reszegi focused her research work on the theoretical issues of customs governing how names are given and used, and the general features of these processes; however, instead of the conventional tools of onomastics and the theoretical-logical approach, she relies on the latest achievements made in cognitive linguistics, psycho- and neurolinguistics, thereby applying the approach of cognitive sciences. Her theoretical premise is that names exist in the human brain as linguistic elements, and are used for the purposes of communication, in communities, consequently, general issues of onomastic theory have to be re-evaluated based on how names exist in the mental system. An additional benefit of this approach is that certain aspects of name usage, which have previously never even surfaced in onomastic research, can also be studied. In the network-based model of the mind’s functionality, a name is represented as a set of information on a particular subject, processed and stored in the mind, coupled with a dynamic network of distinguishing features relevant to the word, the latter of which varies by person. In a mental system taken in this sense, language, and within it, toponymic representations and spatial representations are closely integrated with each other (2009a, 2014).



With the aforementioned in mind, Reszegi attempted to throw light on the relationship between, on the one hand, the mental map and toponyms, and on the other hand, the usage of toponyms (2012a). Applying a cognitive approach, she also re-interpreted the process of proper-name-to-appellative transformations (2010b): bringing the mental aspect of it into the foreground, the process can be interpreted as a change in the network model of the mental lexicon, more specifically, a change in the units and the links within this network. She also attempted to explore the relationship between the mental representations of names from different languages comprising name-pairs (2013, 2016a). On theoretical grounds, she also commented on the concept of name communities (2015a). Within the literature, some works interpret the concept as a virtual entity, while in others, actual communities are meant by it. Reszegi points out those name communities are dynamic groups in the real world, organized on a number of different grounds, and they can be described based on what names are known to them and how they use these names. Therefore, discussing these groups as name communities simply means viewing them from the aspect of name knowledge and name usage.

Besides her theoretical works, Reszegi also carried out practical research to understand the toponym-acquisition of children; she followed the linguistic development of two infants, and, based on her observations, she developed hypotheses on the process of toponym-acquisition and its characteristics, in addition to which she also outlined possible courses for further research (2015b, 2016b).

Another direction in her research work is that of the cognitive mechanisms behind the genesis of toponyms and the changes of names. In the light of the knowledge explored on the mental representation of names, she also re-interpreted the ways in which names are given and changed (common-word-to-toponym transformation, semantic extensions, metonymically motivated name-giving) as mental processes (2009b, 2009c, 2012b, 2012c).

**3.11.** Erzsébet Györffy started her research career with the study of medieval hydronyms. The volume summarizing her results (2011a) begins with a discussion of the theoretical issues relevant to hydronyms; the author examines the semantic context of the onomastic corpus and delineates the phenomena of polysemy, homonymy, synonymy and polynymy. Certain distributaries of water could have several names, or even a different name in every settlement involved; Györffy links the existence of these different names for different stretches to the differences between the mental maps of the various onomastic communities. The main chapter of the thesis is the name typology analysis of names of rivers; within the functional-semantic analysis, references are made to the lexical-morphological structures of the names, and the types of name giving

methods are discussed separately. The last sub-chapter is a comparison between the system of river-names and another category of names, the names of lakes. The author uncovers significant differences between the two types of names with regards to proportions of the various types of functional-semantic structures, and concludes that the names of the two types of hydronyms are also characterized by different name-giving processes. Beyond the characteristic features of the Hungarian hydronymic corpus, Győrffy also explored the differences and the similarities between the Swedish and the Hungarian hydronymic systems (2008a).

Following her studies on hydronyms, Győrffy turned her attention to a field in a peripheral status in Hungary, socio-onomastics, and attempted to develop its theoretical as well as its methodological foundations (2013a). Instead of earlier terminologies of natural names and artificial names, also known as popular names and official names, she recommends the categories of normative (formal and general) vs. non-normative (informal and used in the language of a group) names. It is the standard version of a name that is suitable for grasping the usage of language and toponyms in their complexity, therefore, she believes that the terms official name, as well as the terms standardized name and unified name should be discarded (2012a, 2013b).

Her next project was the study of names known to the inhabitants of Tépe—a small village near Debrecen—in the course of which she analysed the factors determining name knowledge (age, gender) in depth. Her research results show a mere 1% of all the names to be known to every member of the community, which raises the question whether shared knowledge on names is sufficient to define the term of name communities (2015a). In the light of similar metrics on name knowledge in other settlements, she later returned to the definition of the term. She also carried out in depth studies on the applicability of mental mapping to socio-onomastics (2015b, 2015c, 2016a). The most generally used method is a combination of interviewing informants with their drawing a map by hand, as in this manner, not only a list of the known names can be compiled, but an image can be formed on the various pieces of information related to those names as well. Győrffy also implemented a novel type of research to explore name competence. In one of the sections of a questionnaire she published on the Internet, she requested informants to sort various toponymic forms into order by the extent to which they considered them typical toponyms. In addition, informants also had to create new names in a name-giving scenario described in detail.

**3.12.** Krisztina Fehér's research work was initially focused on the group of bynames. She collected the bynames of a settlement (Hajdúnánás), and then endeavoured to create a typology—based on Hoffmann's typology—to analyse

the lexical-morphological and the functional-semantic structure of bynames (2002, 2003). Later on, she overviewed the first period of the research of bynames in Hungary (1872-1957) with a critical eye (2004), concerning the problems of terminology, the meaning of proper names, the relationship between common words and bynames, and the typology of bynames.

**3.13.** Historical phonology and toponomastics are intertwined in the research work Róbert Kenyhercz carried out for his doctoral thesis (2011, published as a book in 2013, cf. 2013a). The generally accepted view in Hungarian linguistics is that word initial consonant clusters are a phonotactic structure alien to the Hungarian language, therefore, in antiquity, one way or another, they were dissolved in every loanword. Relying on toponyms containing consonant clusters, Kenyhercz calls this opinion into question—in doing so, he also aims to prove the value of toponyms as sources of phonological history. His objective is justified by the fact that besides providing an ample number of elements for research, this group of words may offer additional clues for the examination of medieval phonological conditions as compared to the data available on appellatives. This is because with names being tied to specific locations, their examination is not limited to the names themselves, but their name-environments can also be grasped, using other elements of the onomastic system as reference points, their actual linguistic contexts can be drawn up. Consequently, it is easier to establish their direct etymons and to determine the time when they were created, not to mention that in certain cases they can facilitate the description of processes in which sound changes spread out territorially. The inclusion of toponyms in research, does, however, require the research project in question to be placed into an onomastic typological context.

Later on, Kenyhercz set out to compile the toponymic corpus of the multilingual (Hungarian, German, Slavic) medieval county of Szepes, using mostly materials found in public archives (2014a, 2015). In the course of his work he uncovered that during the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Slavic *-ovъci* formant—adopted into the Hungarian language as the *-óc* ending—changed a whole series of toponym structures in the county of Szepes, in several cases even replacing a type-denoting ending of Hungarian origin, *-falva* (< *falu* 'village'). By studying the onomastic corpus, he convincingly demonstrated that an active interaction between languages can cause not only words, but in some cases, even productive derivational suffixes to spread from one language to the other as topoformants. His analysis also serves as a model for which factors (natural conditions, administrative conditions, road networks, the filial arrangement of the Churches, etc.) should be taken into consideration when reconstructing the conditions of a particular era (2014b). Kenyhercz devoted a separate study to the transcription practices of medieval charters (2016).

**3.14.** Béla Kocán collected and processed the toponyms of the comitat of Ugocsa. His dictionary, due to be published soon, contains the entire onomastic corpus of the county, from the first written records up to the present day. The topic of his doctoral dissertation (2013a, published as a book in 2017) was the medieval segment of the onomastic corpus. One of his research objectives was to uncover the ethnic groups the presence of which in the territory can be proven through a linguistic description of the toponyms of the county of Ugocsa. Another objective was to discover what can be found out about these groups from a temporal aspect. He paid special attention to the light the toponymic corpus throws on the beginnings of the Hungarian-Slavic contact and the later symbiosis in certain parts of the county. Additionally, he also examined the conditions of two ethnic groups of lesser significance in the territory, namely Germans and Romanians. Another objective of the study was to present the general onomastic typological features observable in the unfolding and the development of the onomastic corpus of the county. During the initial phase of the time interval covered by the study, the corpora of hydronyms and settlement names were dominated by single-constituent names, two-constituent names for rivers gained dominance in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and two-constituent names for settlements in the 15<sup>th</sup> century; Hungarian microtoponyms, on the other hand, were characterized by a dominance of two-constituent name structures right from the beginning. Kocán also addressed the systematic inner relationships of toponyms and a tendency of internal construction of onomastic systems, i.e., the evolution of name clusters.

**3.15.** Barbara Bába started her research career studying the names of trees (2008), while she later turned her attention to the corpus of geographical common words. In her doctoral dissertation (2013a) and the volume based on it (2016a), she explored the medieval system of geographical common words and the tendencies in their changes, for which purpose, however, she also relied on conclusions drawn from studies on the conditions of present day appellatives denoting places. One of the significant fruits of her labour is a novel approach to geographical common words, which takes into consideration the relationship between this group of words and the concept of lexical topoformants. According to her definition, geographical common words are lexemes for denoting places, which, when parts of toponyms, in most cases fulfil the function of denoting types, therefore, are also acting as topoformants. She examined both of these two functions in medieval charters. Based on this study, she explored the key factors which may have determined whether a particular appellative element was included in the text in Hungarian or in Latin (e.g., the type of the place, the structure of the name, the function and the position of the word within the charter). She also analysed the transformational processes of this group of

words (for example, the typological re-organization of topoformants, factors altering the frequency with which geographical common words occur) and attempted to find the reasons behind them. She illustrated the theoretical and methodological observations on an actual group of words, i.e., the transformation processes of three lexemes originally denoting fishing equipment and later fishing locations as well.

**3.16.** Melinda Szőke analysed the onomastic corpus contained in the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Garamszentbenedek (the original version from the year 1075, that was interpolated in the 12<sup>th</sup> and in the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries) (2013a, 2015). The charter she chose, however, raises more general questions of philology and onomastic history. From the earliest phase of Hungarian statehood, the 11<sup>th</sup> century, there are only four authentic charters known; the existing charters from the era have mostly survived as copies, and quite often false copies at that. Then again, from a linguistic perspective, the status of charters which have survived in falsified or transcribed versions is rather problematic, as there is no telling whether the Hungarian language elements they contain reflect the typical name usage of the time of the original version, or the time at which the transcribed version was written, whether or not the elements do actually correspond to the dates indicated on these charters. The reliable chronological identification of data from charters is a fundamental requirement for any linguistic or historical onomastic study. Therefore, Melinda Szőke attempted to develop a methodological framework and system of aspects which would make it possible to match these charters with a problematic status to specific points in time. She presented the clues of historical linguistics, philology, and, in some cases, even diplomacy, relying on which charters with dubious chronological statuses and the value of the toponyms they contain as primary sources for historical linguistics can be determined with a high certainty.

Having developed a suitable methodology, Szőke endeavoured to extend her research to other charters from the 11<sup>th</sup> century Hungary. As the first step of her large-scale project, she studied the chronological circumstances of the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Bakonybél (2016).

**3.17.** Éva Kovács undertook the task of processing the Hungarian language toponyms found in the Census of the Abbey of Tihany from the year 1211 (2013a, 2015). In doing so, she dealt in detail with the relationship between the Census of Tihany and the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany from 1055, making an attempt to re-evaluate the status of the primary source with regards to the founding charter. The draft version of the census of 1211 has also survived, thus, Kovács had an opportunity to examine the similarities and the differences between the two, and in this way uncover the general charter writing

practices of the era. She analysed the Hungarian language toponyms of the charter by applying a name reconstruction procedure, accordingly, putting emphasis not only on etymology, but also on localization. She compared the names against corpora found in other sources from the same era, and also analysed the relationship between the Hungarian toponyms and the Latin text in depth.

Having processed the toponymic corpus of the census, Kovács then focused on one of the most mysterious primary sources of the 11<sup>th</sup> century Hungary, the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Százd. She thoroughly evaluated the value of the charter as a source for the history of language and names (2016a), and did not refrain from actually analysing the toponymic corpus of the charter (2016b, 2016c).

**3.18.** Using both historical sources (public archives) and current language usage collection, Éva Pásztor collected the microtoponyms of a settlement on the Great Hungarian Plain (Alföld), Hajdúnánás, from the earliest times right up to the present day. Having compiled the toponymic corpus, in her doctoral dissertation (2013) she discussed the methodological issues one has to face when compiling such corpora. She analysed the differences between the ways names are used on maps and in land surveyor's records, at the same time demonstrating how these two types of sources can be used in onomastic research. She made an observation important from the aspect of socio-onomastics: in localities with larger stretches of land nearby, those involved with a particular segment of the outer land can be considered members of the same name community, given their shared knowledge of place-names. She also warns that even though onomasticians make theoretical statements on the toponymic system as a whole, such a system does not actually exist in any of the name users' lexicons in its full complexity. She also addressed the issue of name clusters in detail, presenting a peculiar group of name clusters, i.e., the structural features of name clusters stemming from the names of perished medieval settlements, and, through an actual example, she outlined the ways in which name clusters can be useful in the history of names and settlements.

**3.19.** Eszter Ditrói studied the issue of whether concepts like isoglosses and onomastic dialects—with the latter being used as some sort of a collective term for the former—are justifiable as relevant to toponymic systems, in other words, whether or not territories with distinctive linguistic characteristics with respect to their toponyms can actually be identified (2015, 2017). For this purpose, she introduced a methodological innovation, the application of comparative mathematical statistical functions to toponymic research. On the one hand, using this method, more particularly, a comparative analysis by settlements, she examined the frequency rates of individual toponymic structures. On the

other hand, projecting the frequency rates of toponymic structures fulfilling particular functions, she demonstrated what geographical objects limit the scope of individual phenomena. In this manner, she successfully drew the isoglosses. In addition, Ditrói also wished to determine the territories of individual onomastic dialects. However, to do so—since the prevalence lines of individual toponymic structures do not coincide—she used matrix-based methods, which allowed her to simultaneously compare the frequency data for several properties and toponymic structures. Within the scope of her study, Ditrói also analysed the factors determining the isoglosses and onomastic dialects, thereby successfully proving that not only the geographical environment, but cultural, migrational and multilingual environments can also influence onomastic systems.

**3.20.** The youngest members of the research group are the students of the doctoral school and the doctoral candidates. The interest in onomastic history is also evident in their circles. Helga Kovács compiled the corpus of surviving medieval Hungarian castle-names, and is currently working on the linguistic analysis of these names for her doctoral dissertation. Castle-names are of particular importance not only to linguists, but also to historians, therefore, with regards to this name type Kovács, based on her linguistic analysis, is also attempting to review the previous findings of history and historical linguistics (2015a, 2015b). István Bátori undertook the typological analysis of the medieval settlement name corpora of three Transylvanian counties (Kolozs, Doboka, Fehér). As part of his work, he pays special attention to the issues of lexical settlement name formants (2013, 2014, 2015). The onomastic corpus the study of which Júlia Béres undertook is that of the Hortobágy, a region near Debrecen (2014a, 2014b). Besides processing historical data, she is also performing a collection of current language usage data, as she wishes to form an idea of the transformation processes of names. As in the fields of science related to onomastics, several different concepts of the region of Hortobágy exist, some of which are not necessarily relevant to onomastics, Béres attempts to delineate the region based on systematic relationships between toponyms.

The topics of historical onomastics are not limited to the typological study of toponyms. The topic of the dissertation Evelin Mozga is currently working on is the history of anthroponyms: she is studying the anthroponyms found in the Census of the Abbey of Tihany from the year 1211 (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016). Her goal is to separate the etymological layers of the anthroponymic corpus of the charter—a total of some two thousand names—from each other. Csilla Katona's studies demonstrate that early toponymic corpora are useful for the research of historical linguistics: she is examining sound changes, relying on medieval toponyms as well as dialectal lexemes (2011, 2016a, 2016b).

Apart from historical studies, the research of socio-onomastic topics is also gaining popularity with the young researchers. Teodóra Tóth is currently carrying out work of this nature in the Hungarian-Ukrainian bilingual settlements of the region known as Szernye-mocsár, which today is a part of Ukraine (2013, 2014). Katalin E. Nagy is also performing socio-onomastic research work: she is studying the onomastic knowledge of people living in smaller settlements near Debrecen, and the factors influencing such knowledge (2015). Similar research is being carried out by Zsuzsa Szilágyi Varga in areas of Transylvania inhabited by Hungarians (2015). She also uses the method of mental mapping in her work. Studying the onomastic knowledge of people living in a small settlement, Kisbábony, she found ethnicity (ethnic segregation) to have an effect on the development of the mental maps in individual persons' heads, and consequently, also on their onomastic knowledge and their usage of names.



As the overview presented here shows, historical linguistic and onomastic research have been elements of the main research profile of the Department of Hungarian Linguistics at the University of Debrecen for a long time now, and the results produced by this research during the last two decades have raised the Department to the status of one of the most prestigious centres on historical onomastics in the Carpathian Basin, while the group of researchers has also been ever more actively involved in the international scientific life, one example for which is the organization and coordination of the 26<sup>th</sup> ICOS congress. Nowadays, the research work performed in Debrecen is covering an ever broader spectrum of onomastics, conventional topics are being supplemented by the addition of emerging new issues and approaches. The scientific recognition of the achievements made by the research group is manifested not only in successful tenders, but also in the fact that the governance of the Lajos Kiss award—founded in 2005 to commemorate one of the most prominent figures in Hungarian onomastics—has been entrusted by the founder to our department. Eligible candidates for the biennial award are young researchers of historical onomastics with outstanding achievements. The board of trustees has thus far recognized the achievements of as many as three experts from the research group—Valéria Tóth, Anita Rácz, and Rita Póczos—by granting them the Lajos Kiss award.



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