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***Methodological Problems in Etymological Research
on Old Toponyms of the Carpathian Basin****

Etymology plays a decisive role in research in historical toponomastics. Without the etymological investigation of names, their linguistic structure and their system cannot be described and they cannot be used in studies focusing on general linguistic and historical issues (e.g., ethnic history). Therefore, it is not surprising that Hungarian research on name history has been dominated by etymology from the beginning. This scholarly field has already achieved a lot in mapping the stock of toponyms in the Carpathian Basin (cf. MELICH 1925–1929, KNIEZSA 1938, 1943–1944, FNESz.) but opportunities in etymological research have expanded greatly in recent decades, opening up new directions and methodological opportunities. This is because those typological descriptive models have been born that can be used well for the description of the structure, creation, change of names or the relationship between name systems (cf. e.g., HOFFMANN 1993, TÓTH 2008, PÓCZOS 2010, HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017, 2018); at the same time, such a methodological process is also being formed that is called historical toponym reconstruction and which represents a new milestone in the exploration of the linguistic-etymological attributes of names (cf. HOFFMANN 2007, HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017: 162–165, 2018: 459–470). It also greatly contributes to this process that with the spreading of digital technology and digital databases so abundant data collections could be presented for research that onomasticians could previously only dream about. Therefore, there is hope that etymological research will gain a new momentum also in terms of the toponym corpus of the Carpathian Basin.

In this paper I would like to touch upon various methodological questions that represent a challenge in toponym-etymological studies and which, if disregarded, may influence or even distort our ideas expressed in relation to etymological issues. Therefore, I discuss the advantages of using the complex method of historical toponym reconstruction as opposed to the traditional etymological approach when trying to explore the linguistic history of various toponyms. At the same time, I will also touch upon the question of the source value of toponymic data in certain types of sources (more specifically the charters of an

* This work was carried out as part of the Research Group on Hungarian Language History and Toponomastics (University of Debrecen–Hungarian Academy of Sciences) as well as the project *International Scientific Cooperation for Exploring the Toponymic Systems in the Carpathian Basin* (ID: NRDI 128270, supported by National Research, Development and Innovation Fund, Hungary).



uncertain chronological status: forged, copied or interpolated charters) from the perspective of etymology. Moreover, the question of etymological authenticity also has to be in the focus in etymological studies. This means that the etymology of certain toponyms cannot be established with the same degree of certainty and the possible options cannot be verified to the same extent.

1. Using one early toponym (and its diverse network of relations) I would like to illustrate the difference between the etymological approach concentrating on the etymon of names and the **methodology of historical toponym reconstruction** as well as the additional insights we can gain with the use of the latter. *Taszár* settlement located in Bars County, in the northern part of the Carpathian Basin, is first mentioned in an 11th-century charter: 1075/+1124/+1217: villa *Tazzar* (DHA 1: 214). The traditional etymological approach argues that the *Taszár* toponym is of Slavic origin, its source is a Slavic **Tesari* toponym in plural form, the linguistic meaning of which in Slavic is ‘carpenters’ (cf. FNESz. *Ácsteszér*, *Teszér*; TÓTH 2001: 242, SZŐKE 2015: 200). The etymological publications also indicate the historical background information that the denomination could refer to the settlement of such servants of the court who were obliged to perform carpenter’s work. Besides these, the scholars have also highlighted the changes in the phonological form: the Slavic mixed vowel form, after entering the Hungarian language, adapted to the phonotactic rules of Hungarian and it took the form of the velar *Taszár* or palatal *Teszér*. Thus this is what we might learn about the *Taszár* toponym with the help of etymon-based etymology (or at least what it usually tells us).

Of course, toponym reconstruction also starts out from the name etymon but it looks at the name within a very extensive network of relationships that includes the following factors: the attributes of the source containing the name and the context of the name within the source; the totality of data referring to the referent of the name; all occurrences of the name in the Carpathian Basin (i.e., its onomatogeography); the name cluster (name field) it fits into typologically; the reality and local relations of the referent (i.e., its natural-social environment and name environment). If we examine the name in this extensive, multi-dimensional system of relationships, our etymological findings will become more robust and accurate. In the following, I would like to provide more details about these “dimensions” through the example of the *Taszár* toponym in Bars County.

1.1. In the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek, which mentions *Taszár* settlement in Bars County for the first time, the toponym appears in the following **context**: “Dedi eciam villam Bissenorum ad arandum nomine *Tazzar* super *Sitoua* cum terra XX aratorum, et magnam silvam versus orientalem et meridionalem plagam cum pratis et pascuis, et decem domus carpentariorum, terminatam propriis terminis.” (DHA 1: 214, SZŐKE 2015: 45). The translation



of this section is the following: “I also gave the village of the Pechenegs called *Tazzar* above *Sitoua* with 20 aratrum of land for cultivation and one large forest to the southeast with meadows and pastures, limited by its own boundaries, as well as ten housefuls of carpenters.”

It is especially important for us from this context that in the 1075 Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek Géza I. (together with the natural and agricultural assets) also donated ten housefuls of carpenters or cart makers (10 domus carpentariorum) to the Abbey, together with *Taszár* village (DHA 1: 214, Gy. 1: 422, 480, SZŐKE 2015: 51–52). Therefore, the first important lesson learned that we may use later is that there were certainly carpenters living in the village of *Taszár*.

1.2. For the exploration of the etymological and linguistic form of a toponym, it is absolutely necessary to see the name as **part of its complete dataset**. Thus that condition also has to be fulfilled that the place denoted by the name should be identifiable precisely with its location. This does not cause any problems in our case: in the 11th century *Taszár* settlement mentioned in the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek is located in the central part of Bars County, on the right shore of the Zsitva River.

Its dataset indicates from the first mention to this date that it has continuously been an inhabited settlement, with its earliest data (from the early Old Hungarian Era) being the following: 1075/+1124/+1217: *dedi eciam villam Bissenorum ad arandum nomine Tazzar super Sitoua*, 1209 P.: *Tessar*, pr. (Gy. 1: 480, DHA 1: 214), +1209/XVII.: *Thaszar*, v., 1275: *Thescer*, t. (Gy. 1: 447, 480). After the early Old Hungarian Era (895–1301), the records of the settlement name multiplied thanks to favorable circumstances related to sources: 1353: *Thezer*, p. (A. 6: 5), 1453, 1493, 1496, 1506: *Thazar*, p. (ComBars. 103), 1366: *Thezer*, v., p. (ComBars. 103), 1378, 1382: *Thezar*, p. (ComBars. 103), 1382: *Thazar*, *Thazaar*, *Thezer*, p., 1424: *Thezer*, 1435: *Thesser*, 1436: *Tazar*, 1476: *Thazad*, p., 1570: [*Taszár*], 1603: *Thaszar*, 1780: *Taszar*, *Teszare*, pag., 1806–1808: *Taszár*, *Tesáre*, *Tesáry*, *Tiřar*, pag., 1828: *Thaszár*, *Tesare*, pag., 1893: *Taszár*, 1905: *Taszár*, 1906: *Barstaszár* (MEZŐ 1999: 383), 1907–1913: *Barstaszár* (ComBars. 104). *Barstaszár* now belongs to Slovakia, its Slovakian linguistic form is: *Tesáre nad Žitavou* (LELKES 2011: 121).

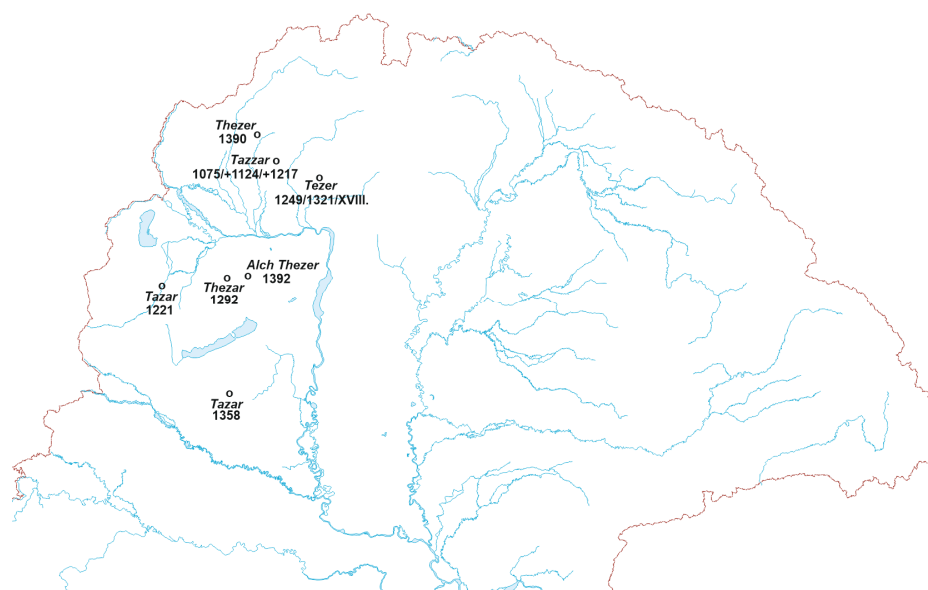
Among the earliest records we can also find the original Slavic *Teszár* form with mixed vowels (but also might be used in Hungarian) but later the forms in line with vowel harmony are dominant (both in the palatal *Teszér* and velar *Taszár* forms). The phonologically balanced name forms certainly reflect Hungarian name usage and Hungarian name users irrespective of the fact that according to the etymological opinion introduced above the name givers of the settlement name were Slavs. This differentiation between the name givers and name users has to be considered in all cases in the process of toponym



reconstruction. This is because the written sources shed light only on current name usage, the act of name giving, name genesis could take place even centuries before. This is especially significant from one perspective: that of the chronology of ethnic conclusions based on the linguistic form and etymology of toponyms.

The records with mixed vowels occasionally appearing later in the dataset of the name, besides the forms with vowel harmony, may indicate dual Slavic–Hungarian name usage: after the fluctuation of velar and palatal forms throughout the centuries, from the 15th century the *Taszár* form is in general use in Hungarian, the *Teszáre* ~ *Teszáry* forms certainly indicate Slavic (more specifically Slovak) name users, just as it is also typical of today's name usage: Hung. (Bars)*taszár* ~ Slovak *Tesáre nad Žitavou*. The *Tissar* data from the early 19th century (besides the Hungarian *Taszár* and the Slovak *Tesáre*, *Tesáry*) could be the German name form of the settlement (LELKES 2011: 121).

1.3. In the medieval Carpathian Basin, besides the one in Bars County, we are also aware of additional *Teszér* or *Taszár* settlement names. The regional location of these is indicated on Map 1 (also showing the first record of the name).



Map 1. *Taszár* ~ *Teszér* settlements in the medieval Carpathian Basin

Settlements named *Taszár* and *Teszér* are located in the Middle Ages only in the western and northwestern parts of the Carpathian Basin, and with the exception of the place in Bars County mentioned in the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek, all appear in the documents during the 13th-14th centuries. Most of them still exist as settlement names. Among the toponymic data, we



can find the primary Slavic form (but not necessarily indicating Slavic name users) with mixed vowels as well as the *Taszár* and *Teszér* forms with vowel harmony (certainly indicating Hungarian name users). What kind of a conclusions we may draw from the regional attributes of the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér*-type settlement names will be addressed again later.

1.4. During toponym reconstruction the analyzed toponyms are examined not in an isolated manner, individually but as elements of the **name cluster, name field (semantic category)** that they belong to most directly. In the case of the *Taszár* place name, this name field means the type of settlement names with an occupational name origin the final source of which is a Slavic occupational name. The problematics of the Hungarian *Taszár*-type of settlement names lies in the fact that these names could be created, on the one hand, in the Slavic languages from a Slavic occupational name base word by Slavic name givers, then the Slavic toponym could be borrowed by the Hungarian speakers who adapted it to the phonotactic-phonological system of their own language. But it cannot be excluded either that the Slavic occupational name itself entered the Hungarian language in a common noun status and the toponym was formed from this common noun (now as an element of the Hungarian language) with Hungarian name giving, fitting into the type of Hungarian settlement names formed metonymically from occupational names.

The name field has such elements as *Konyár* (1213/1550: *Kanar*, Gy. 1: 635, Bihar county) and *Kanyár* (1214/1334: *Kanar*, NÉMETH 1997: 103, Szabolcs county; cf. Sl. *konjar* ‘horse herder’); *Taszár* (1075/+1124/+1217: *Tazzar*, DHA 1: 214, Bars county) and *Teszér* (1249/1321/XVIII.: *Tezer*, Gy. 3: 259, Hont county; cf. old Sl. **Tesari* toponym in plural ‘carpenters’); *Csitár* (1113: *Scitar*, DHA 1: 395–396, Nyitra county) and *Csatár* (1295/1423: *Chatar*, Gy. 1: 504, Békés county; cf., e.g., Czech *Štítary* pl. toponym ‘shield makers’); *Dejtár* (1255: *Dehter*, Gy. 4: 235, Nógrád county) and *Détér* (1246/1383: *Deltar* [ɔ: *Dehtar*], Gy. 2: 493, Gömör county; cf. Czech *Dehtáry* pl. toponym ‘wood tar burners’); *Gerencsér* (1251: *Geruncher*, Gy. 4: 390, Nyitra county; cf. Sl. **G̃ričare* pl. toponym ‘potters’); *Lóc* (1232>1347: *Louch*, Gy. 2: 523, Gömör county; cf. Sl. *Lovci* pl. toponym ‘hunters’); *Ócsár* (1247/1412: *Olchar*, Gy. 1: 351, Baranya county; cf. proto-Sl. **ovbčari* pl. toponym ‘shepherds’); *Vinár* (1221: *Winar*, PRT 1: 651, Veszprém county; cf. Czech *Vinary* pl. toponym ‘wine producers, winemakers’), etc.

Thus what is common in the elements of the name field is that these settlement names can be originated ultimately from Slavic occupational name lexemes according to the generally-accepted etymological analysis. From the perspective of the dual direction of toponym formation mentioned above, we need to discuss primarily those for which no common noun parallels can be identified in Hungarian during the early Old Hungarian Era, i.e., there are no such mentions



based on which the common noun ‘shield maker’, ‘carpenter’, ‘winemaker’ meanings of the *csatár* ~ *csitár*, *taszár* ~ *teszér*, *vinár*, etc. lexemes could be supposed with high probability in Hungarian. This obviously does not necessarily mean that these words could not enter the Hungarian language as occupational names, it only means that this possible option cannot be verified with parallel common noun data, which makes this supposition weaker, even though it does not exclude it.

In connection with the name field (based on the above), we may formulate the hypothesis differing from the traditional analysis that the elements belonging here cannot be judged the same way from the perspective of name giving (and thus etymology): in some cases it is more likely that they have become the elements of the Hungarian toponym system as Slavic loan toponyms, while in other cases it is more likely (even despite the lack of common noun records) that after the borrowing of the Slavic occupational name the given lexeme became a settlement name in Hungarian (as a result of Hungarian name giving).

What kind of factors may be considered to verify this hypothesis? And what could be those denominations in the case of which the latter option should be considered? I cannot discuss all possible lexemes here, therefore, I highlight only two of the elements from the semantic field and refer to some possible guidelines through these examples. The bases of the following overview are the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér* settlement names and the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* denominations, together with their supposed base words.

1.4.1. It could be informative for us to know whether the mentioned lexemes appear in a **personal name status** in the earliest documented period (or possibly later). This is an important factor because in Hungarian around one third of occupational names can be found in the Old Hungarian Era as personal names; cf., e.g., *ardó* ‘forester’ (1248: *Ardo*, Cs. 1: 289, Sáros county; cf. +1214/1334: *Ardeu* personal name, *ÁSz.* 72), *csósz* ‘crier, announcer, prison guard’ (1192/1375/1425: *Cheuzy*, Gy. 1: 217, Bács county; cf. 1307: *Cheuz* personal name, *FNESz.*), *dusnok* ‘person performing religious service related to the wake’ (1215/1550: *Dusunic*, Gy. 1: 614, Bihar county; cf. 1211: *Dosnuch* personal name, *ÁSz.* 258), *kovács* ‘smith’ (+1015/+1158//PR.: *Chovas*, Gy. 1: 330, Baranya county; cf. 1253/1322: *Cuach* personal name, *ÁSz.* 227), *lovász* ‘stableman’ (1198 P./PR.: *Luascu*, Gy. 1: 723, Bodrog county; cf. 1138/1329: *Luas* personal name, *ÁSz.* 498), *szakács* ‘cook’ (1286: *Zakach*, *ÁÚO* 9: 449, Veszprém county; cf. 1138/1329: *Sacas* personal name, *ÁSz.* 686), *szántó* ‘farmer’ (1001 e./1109: *Σάμταγ*, *DHA* 1: 85, Veszprém county; cf. 1373: *Zantho* personal name, *OkISz.*), *szekeres* ‘transporter using wagons’ ([+1077–1095]> +1158//PR.: *Zekeres*, Gy. 1: 728, Bodrog county; cf. +1086: *Scekeres* personal name, *ÁSz.* 696), *szőlős* ‘viticulturist’ (1075/+1124/+1217: *Sceulleus*, Gy. 1: 478, Bars county; cf. 1211: *Zeuleus* personal name, *ÁSz.* 849), *takács* ‘weaver’



(1304/1464: *Takach*, Gy. 2: 635, Győr county; cf. 1266>1348: *Takach* personal name, *ÁSz.* 739), etc. (These include words both of Hungarian and foreign origin.) Other occupational names appear as family names in sources from the late Old Hungarian Era (1350–1526) and their use in this function can be tracked to this day (for more information, see: HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017: 188, 2018: 285–286).

We can also see it from the data that the occupational names appear without a formant as personal names in Hungarian (e.g., *csősz*, *kovács*, *takács*, etc. occupational name > *Csősz*, *Kovács*, *Takács*, etc. anthroponym). Thus in case the base words resembling occupational names among the settlement names belonging to the name field of *Taszár* can also be found in an anthroponym status in Hungarian (thus as personal names of the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér*, *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* form), there is a good chance that the given lexeme really existed in Hungarian as an occupational name.¹ If, however, there are no such occurrences and only the forms with the *-i* formant (family name formant) deriving from toponyms are known in a personal name function (i.e., the *Taszári* ~ *Teszéri*, *Csatári* ~ *Csitári* personal names), this circumstance rather confirms the toponym status of Slavic origin, and goes against the (Slavic occupational name >) Hungarian occupational name > Hungarian settlement name formation.

The main lesson learned from the analyses is that the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér* and the *Csitár* ~ *Csatár* names do not behave the same way in this respect. While we cannot find records of the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér* personal names in the contemporary sources (and neither later), we can encounter the *Csitár* ~ *Csatár* anthroponyms from the earliest charters to this day; cf., e.g., 1138/1329: *nomina servorum qui debent servire preposito cum suis curribus [...] in villa Kalsar: Vleu, Biqua, Citar, Dubos, Gatadi*; 1274>1411: *Chythar iobagio castri Poseniensis* (*ÁSz.* 199); 1211: *Et est in villa illa [Fotud]: Chatar, filius Emrici (Heymrici), Held vinitor ecclesie* (*ÁSz.* 179). Or later: 1458: *Andrea Chatar* (RMCsSz. 221). *Csitár* ~ *Csatár* are also part of the current Hungarian family name system.

The *Taszári* ~ *Teszéri* and *Csitári* ~ *Csatári* family names deriving from a settlement name antecedent also appear in the charters of the late Old Hungarian Era: these name forms refer to the place of origin or residence of the given person (see RMCsSz. 1052 and 1063, as well as 221 and 250), thus it is not surprising that they appear primarily in those areas where the given settlement

¹ We should also add that personal names could also be formed from occupational names in Slavic languages. If these Slavic personal names were also created without a formant from the relevant occupational name (cf. SVOBODA 1964: 172, BENEŠ 1962: 210), this means that the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér*, *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* personal names possibly found in Hungarian could even be of Slavic origin, thus we do not have to presuppose the *taszár* ~ *teszér*, *csatár* ~ *csitár* common nouns for them in Hungarian.



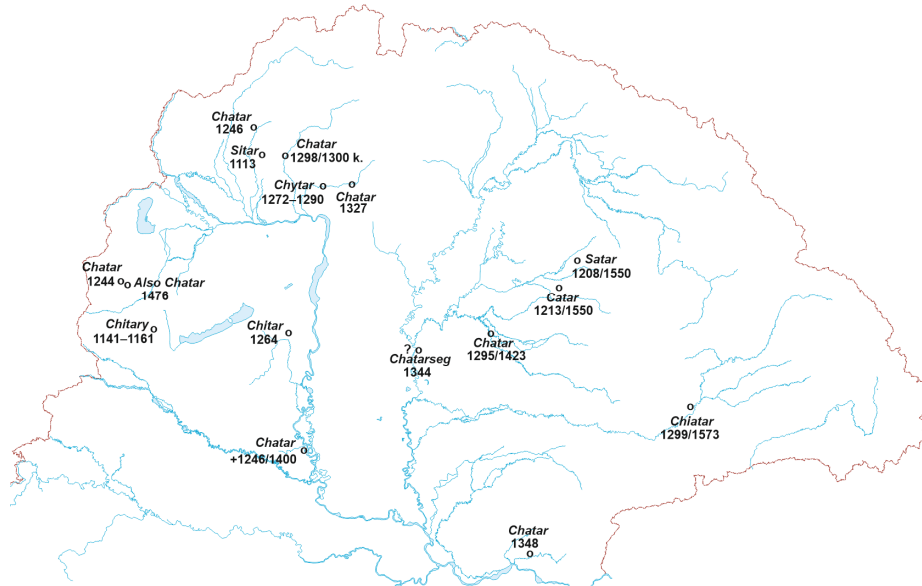
names can also be found. Although anthroponyms could also be formed from settlement names metonymically (especially in the early period when such a role of the *-i* morpheme could still be peripheral; cf. e.g., 1211: *Neugrad* personal name from the *Nógrád* settlement name, *ÁSz.* 581), this name-giving method was much more rare than the formation of personal names from settlement names using the *-i* formant (for more details, see TÓTH 2016: 148–157). This means that the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* personal names can be considered as names formed from the relevant occupational names with high probability (and not from the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* settlement name), which in turn supports the use of the *csatár* ~ *csitár* ‘shield maker’ lexeme in Hungarian during the Middle Ages. We cannot mention the same argument supporting the existence of *taszár* ~ *teszér* ‘carpenter’ in Hungarian of the time based on anthroponym data.

4.1.2. Toponyms are linguistic elements bound to a location: this is their basic feature due to their function and denotative meaning. As opposed to this, the common nouns spread easier: their spreading may be limited only by confronting another lexeme of the same function, meaning. Thus when deciding if *taszár* ~ *teszér*, *csatár* ~ *csitár* existed in Hungarian as common nouns (occupational names) the **toponym geographical features** of the relevant settlement name data may offer some assistance. While the category of settlement names of a Slavic origin may appear in areas where people of Slavic origin used to live (at the time of name giving), the settlement names from Slavic loan words have no such regional limitations: these may appear anywhere as the common noun may spread more extensively in Hungarian.

There is no opportunity here for detailed analysis but we can make one important note about the onomatogeographic features of the settlement name records of the two chosen lexemes. We may encounter the *Taszár* ~ *Teszér* settlement names in a lower number and in a well definable area (Map 1) and what is more, in a region (the west and northwest) where based on other sources we are aware of a Slavic population and Slavic-Hungarian relations in the early Old Hungarian Era.

The onomatogeography of the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* settlement names is more diverse and extensive: besides the north(western) and western regions, we may find these names in the middle regions of the Carpathian Basin also, what is more, there are some settlement names of this kind in the south and east as well (Map 2).





Map 2. Csatár ~ Csitár settlements in the medieval Carpathian Basin

A part of the names certainly appears in areas where we are less aware of Slavic–Hungarian contacts. Therefore, in these areas it is more likely that it was not name borrowing that played a role in the formation of the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* settlement names (as in the case of *Taszár* ~ *Teszér*) but the relevant (Slavic) loan word became a settlement name in Hungarian by means of metonymic name giving. Thus the onomatogeography of the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* settlement names also supports the same idea as the anthroponym records, that in Hungarian there could be a *csatár* ~ *csitár* occupational name (possibly with a broader ‘weapon maker’ semantic content; see Gy. 1: 293) but there is no trace of this lexeme today either in colloquial language or in dialects. At the same time, we cannot exclude it either that there is Slavic name giving behind some of the *Csatár* ~ *Csitár* settlement names, we only claim that this form of name genesis cannot be deemed exclusive in the case of these names.

1.5. There is one more circumstance that underlines this finding: the **name environment, local conditions** of certain settlements. This analysis is also an important stage of toponym reconstruction.

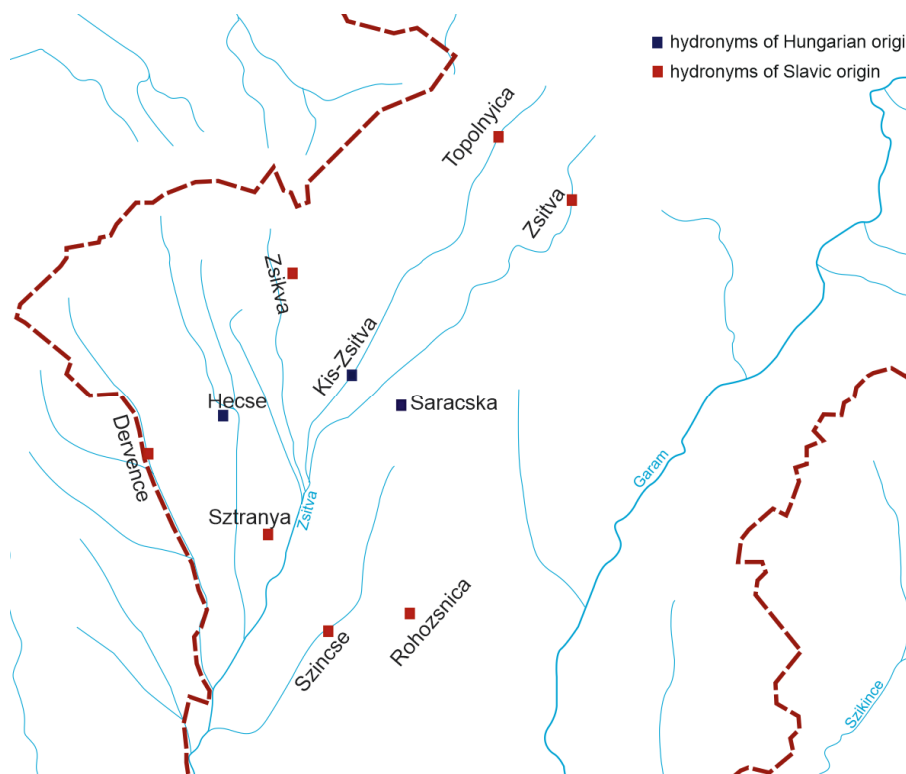
The name corpus of the early Old Hungarian Era in the given region (due to its relative abundance) represents a good basis for this analysis. The direct toponym environment of *Taszár* is made up by the names of the region between the rivers Zsitva and Dervence and the valley of the two rivers until they merge. We have records of 69 toponyms in this region from the examined period (besides *Taszár*). The distribution of the names according to language origin in the different toponym types shows major differences (see Table 1).



	Slavic	Hungarian	Slavic or Hungarian	unknown	total
early Old Hungarian Era – hydronyms	7	3			10
early Old Hungarian Era – settlement names	14	24	3	6	47
early Old Hungarian Era – microtoponyms	1	10		1	12
total	26	32	5	6	69

Table 1. Indicators of the name environment of Taszár in Bars County

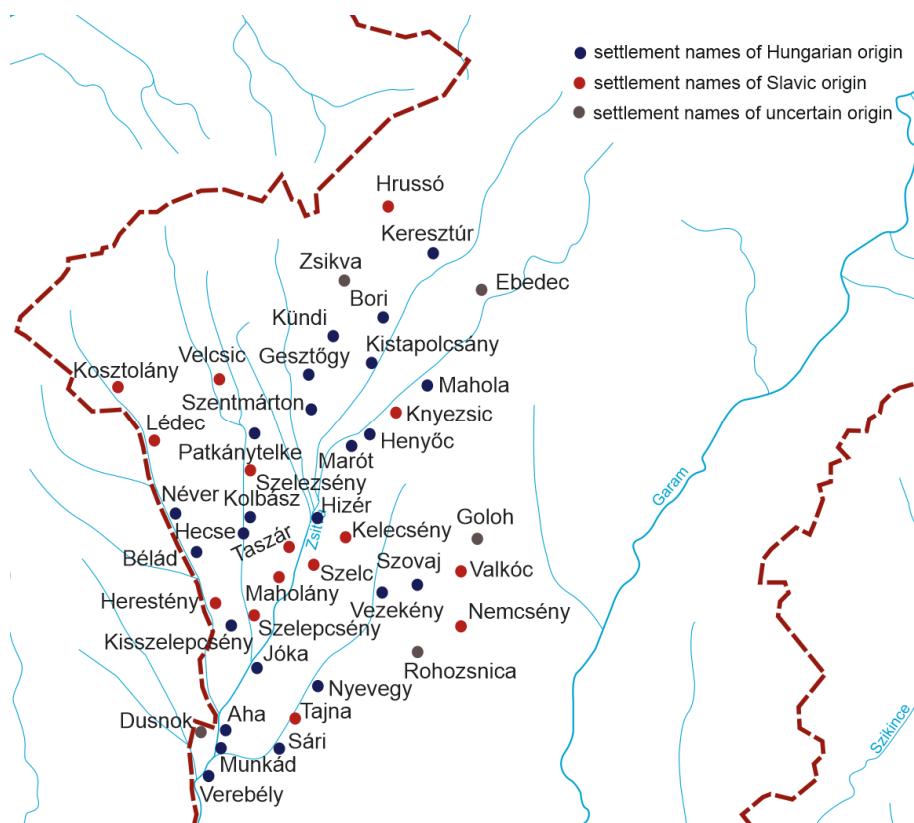
The most ancient toponym layer of the region is clearly represented by the names of the (larger) rivers: we can find almost only Slavic names among these (*Zsitva*, *Zsikva*, *Topolnyica*, *Dervence*, *Rohozsnica*, *Szincse*; the name of the smaller watercourse *Sztranya* may also be a Slavic name, which is mentioned exactly nearby Taszár), there are only *Hecse* and *Saracska* as well as a distributary of the *Zsitva*, the *Kis-Zsitva* ('small *Zsitva*'), that have Hungarian names (see Map 3).



Map 3. Name environment of the settlement Taszár I. Hydronyms



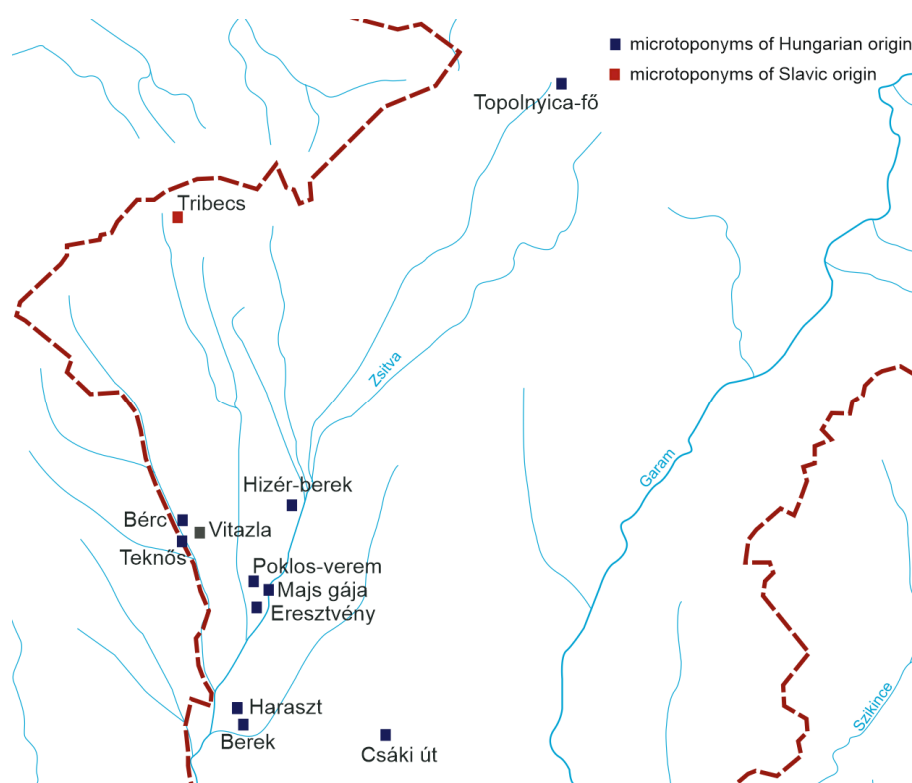
The linguistic origin of the settlement names shows a completely different stratification: names of Hungarian origin have a much bigger proportion around *Taszár* than names of Slavic origin. *Taszár* (which was probably also the result of Slavic name giving) is surrounded by 14 settlement names of Slavic (*Kosztolány, Lédec, Velcsic, Szelezsény, Herestény, Szelepcsény, Malonyán, Szelc, Kelecsény, Knyezsic, Hrussó, Valkóc, Nemcsény, Tajna*) and 24 of Hungarian origin (*Néver, Bélád, Hecse, Henyőc, Kisszelepcsény, Jóka, Aha, Munkád, Verebély, Sári, Nyevegy, Marót, Vezekény, Szovaj, Hizér, Mahola, Kistapolcsány, Bori, Keresztúr, Kündi, Gesztőgy, Szentmárton, Patkánytelke, Kolbász*). In the case of 3 settlement names Hungarian and Slavic name giving are both possible (the settlement names of *Rohozsnica* and *Zsikva* could be formed in any of the languages from the name of the relevant watercourse, while *Dusnok* carries this dual option in itself as an element of a semantical field identical to the names discussed here), while the origin of six settlement names (often due to difficulties with readability) is uncertain (*Ebedec, Goloh, Buzsic, Oszna, Ulog, Selk*) (see Map 4).



Map 4. Name environment of the settlement *Taszár* 2. Settlement names



The microtoponyms around *Taszár* appear as Hungarian names in the sources: *Bérc*, *Teknős*, *Poklos-verem*, *Mojs gaja*, *Eresztvény*, *Haraszt*, *Berek*, *Hizér-berek*, *Topolnyica-fő*. The name of the *Vitazla* valley cannot be explained. Somewhat further away, a woody mountain range in the northwestern part of the county bears a Slavic name: *Tribecs* (see Map 5).



Map 5. Name environment of the settlement *Taszár* 3. Microtoponyms

This outline also confirms that the *Taszár* settlement name first mentioned in the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek could be a denomination of Slavic origin. There is no palpable evidence that would indicate that the *taszár* ~ *teszér* ‘carpenter’ occupational name would have been used in Hungarian also in a common noun status, and toponym reconstruction has not uncovered such circumstances either based on which this idea could be substantiated with adequate foundations. Overall, the fact that the king also donated with the settlement ten housefuls of carpenters among others obviously cannot be a conclusive argument in this respect. It is certain, however, that the mentioned name form already clearly indicates Hungarian name usage in the 11th century: its vowel harmony indicates adaptation to the phonotactic attributes of the Hungarian language.



2. The *Tazzar* record chosen as an example to outline the methodological problems of etymology comes from a charter with an uncertain **chronological status**. This circumstance cannot be disregarded in the etymological study of the names either. The biggest difficulty in connection with these sources is the determination of the actual chronological layers of the charter and the association of the toponymic data to these subsequently. The Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek is an interpolated charter and two chronological layers have been distinguished in it by scholars in diplomatics and historical linguistics: the issuing of the original charter, the 11th century, and the date of interpolation, copying, the 13th century. Scholars have clarified which parts of the charter could be created in the 11th century and which ones belong to the 13th century based on several factors (see DHA 1: 212, SZŐKE 2015: 39–43). Taking this first step is of key significance for the further utilization of the given charter in subsequent studies in the fields of historical linguistics, onomastics or history. This also means that the source value of charters of an uncertain chronological status may be assessed differently than that of the original, authentic charters, and thus their processing also necessitates a different methodology. This methodology was developed for interpolated charters with impressive thoroughness by MELINDA SZŐKE (2015). The basic principles of the method may be applicable not only to interpolated charters but also to forged ones and those that have survived in the form of copies, although these types of sources partly bring up other problems than the interpolated charters. I do not discuss it here how the toponymic data recorded in different types of sources may be used in etymological research (I only wished to indicate the problem) as the study of MELINDA SZŐKE in this volume touches upon the issue (2019).

3. From the perspective of toponym reconstruction (and especially in the ethnic conclusions relying on this) we do not necessarily consider the **etymologies** told to be certain with the same weight. This is because there is a **probability scale** of name explanation that may be created. At one end of this scale, there are the explanations of those names that can be identified (localized) well, appearing at many parts of the language area, with abundant records, and fitting well into a name typological group. At the other end of the scale, there are the explanations of those names the localization of which are uncertain or non-existent, represented by single records, and which cannot be associated with common noun parallels; the linguistic-ethnic identification power of these have to be considered much weaker than that of the others.

The enforcement of the perspective of onomatosystematical embeddedness is an important principle in the process of name reconstruction (as seen before). This is because the etymology that stands alone among name explanations, and which does not have analogous examples, may be accepted with lower probability than those that are supported by a myriad of similar name forms. This



consequence of etymology is due to the fact that toponyms make up a system and the genesis and changes of names may be described with clearly-graspable regularities in a large part of the cases, meaning that the majority of names can be categorized within a type. This, of course, does not exclude the presence of uniquely formed names in the toponymic system of any language, but in most cases typical characteristics can also be identified in the details of their creation and changes. The correct interpretation of these names is especially difficult for toponym etymologists. Of course, the typological perspective has to be enforced not only when explaining toponyms of a Hungarian origin but also in the case of names created in Slavic, Turkish, German, etc. languages and then borrowed by Hungarian.

4. Finally, I would like to summarize those principles which may be followed the most successfully during historical toponym reconstruction. I discussed some of these in detail before, while I would like to reflect briefly on others here.

Etymological research has to rely on data deriving from actual language use. We can only draw conclusions about actual language use in the early centuries of toponym formation from data found in charters and other historical sources. Toponym reconstruction looks at the analyzed toponym in its complete historical depth and considers its embeddedness in name typology. This is needed because the processes of name giving and name change are fundamentally determined by the name models, name patterns (or schemes in other words): during name giving and name changes such names are created for which there is a model in the toponymic system of the given language. These models are of a semantic and morphological nature and there may be shifts in their frequency of use and productivity with time. The changes occurring in the productivity of the models can then be identified also in the changes of the name system of toponyms: some toponym types are pushed into the background with time, while others become dominant; but all this does not result in significant modifications in the character of the toponymic system itself within a shorter time.

As there are extra-linguistic reasons in the background of the genesis of names and their changes, when explaining these we should also consider the extra-linguistic sphere, thus we should also map the socio-cultural medium of the name's existence. Without this, we could not accurately understand the genesis of specific toponyms or certain name types.

Toponym reconstruction, the etymological survey of names also demands an interdisciplinary approach, while using the methodology and tools of linguistics, and within that primarily that of historical linguistics and onomastics. Of the historical disciplines, this mostly involves the different branches of history (settlement history, ethnic history) but results in diplomatics, historical ethnography, historical geography, as well as cultural history may also be helpful for name reconstruction.



The principles outlined here also include the most important tenets of the **functional-linguistic approach**. With this brief overview, I also wished to indicate that functional linguistics (both as a theoretical framework and an approach) can also greatly contribute to research in toponym reconstruction as well as onomastics in general.

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Abstract

The area of the Carpathian Basin that belonged to the former Kingdom of Hungary was a truly diverse region both in a linguistic and ethnic sense. As ethnic relationships are also reflected in the toponymic system of the area and as toponyms are also featured in the earliest written sources, scholars in historical linguistics and history often rely on the information provided by the etymology of names. Thus historical linguistics has an especially important role in the etymological study of names.

In my paper I highlight those methodological principles that should be considered when providing a linguistic explanation for the old toponyms of the Carpathian Basin. First, I address the advantages of using the historical toponym reconstruction process instead of the traditional method of toponym etymology in studies of toponyms. Toponym reconstruction also starts out from the name etymon but it looks at the name within a very extensive network of relationships that includes the following factors: the attributes of the source containing the name and the context of the name within the source; the totality of data referring to the referent of the name (in an adequate historical depth); all occurrences of the name in the Carpathian Basin (i.e., its onomato-geography); the name cluster (name field) it fits into typologically; the reality and local relations of the referent (i.e., its natural-social environment and name environment). If we examine the name in this extensive, multi-dimensional system of relationships, our etymological findings will become more robust and accurate also. I introduce these dimensions through the example of a single toponym, the name of *Taszár* settlement in the northern part of the Carpathian Basin, in Bars County, in the valley of the Zsitva (Žitava).

At the same time, as part of the study of toponyms, it is also important methodologically to consider the status of the source preserving the name in diplomatics; i.e., if we know the record from the original charter or from one that has survived in the form of a copy, or maybe from a forged or interpolated charter. The Charter of Garamszentbenedek preserving the *Taszár* settlement name is an interpolated charter, which means that additional parts were inserted into the original charter dated in the 11th century. The *Taszár* settlement name is part of the original, 11th-century chronological layer of the charter. I also address the role of this feature in my paper.

The question of etymological authenticity also has to be in the focus in etymological studies. This means that the etymology of certain toponyms cannot be established with the same degree of certainty and the possibility cannot be



verified to the same degree. I provide an overview of this issue as well in my paper.

Finally, I also confirm that the historical analysis of toponyms can be carried out most successfully within a functional linguistic framework.

Keywords: etymology, methodology, historical toponym reconstruction, Carpathian Basin, Middle Ages

