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A Historical Linguistic Analysis of Hungarian Toponyms in Non-Authentic Charters*

1. Historical linguistic records represent the most valuable sources for studies aimed at the early history of the Hungarian language. The era with written records spans a millennium in the case of Hungarian. Various remnants have survived from the early period, a significant part of which are legal documents, i.e., charters. These documents written in Latin contain a large number of vulgar toponyms and personal names and these Hungarian words form the basis of studies in historical linguistics concerning the early Old Hungarian Era (895–1350).

We have only a few charters from the beginning of the history of Hungarian charter writing, the 11th century, especially in comparison with later eras. Moreover, a significant part of these were not written in the 11th century but a) this century was indicated in the forged text, or b) the original 11th-century text of the charter was expanded, interpolated in later centuries, and c) there are also some among these that have not survived in their original form but only in later copies (cf. HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017: 71–76). It was a long-held view that studies in historical linguistics may rely only on authentic charters that have survived in their original form or possibly on the onomastic corpus of copies. Therefore the interpolated charters and the completely forged documents were left out of linguistic analysis. In the last 1 or 2 decades, however, one can see a change of approach in historical linguistics: the researchers are including the onomastic corpus of non-authentic charters and that of those that have not survived in the original more and more (HOFFMANN 2010, SZŐKE 2015, 2016, KOVÁCS 2018, PÓCZOS 2018, PELCZÉDER 2018). This is enabled by the development of a methodology that has made the study of the linguistic corpus of sources of an uncertain chronology possible also (SZŐKE 2015, 2018).

I will discuss two examples from 11th-century charters to illustrate how the unique philological situation of interpolated and forged charters may help us make etymological knowledge more accurate, using the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek and the Charter of Pécsvárad. I have chosen the *Susolgi* name of the Charter of Garamszentbenedek and the *Sorlogys* name of the Charter

of Pécsvárad because despite the fact that several people have studied them, their origin has still not been established with certainty. At the same time, scholars studying these names were either not considering the remnants of the charters or used them in a way that did not take the uncertain linguistic status of the documents into account. Although the detailed analysis of these names cannot fully remove the associated uncertainties, it can provide guidelines for additional studies.

2. Usually three dates are mentioned in connection with the Charter of Garamszentbenedek (1075, 1124, 1217). The first one (1075) indicates the time of writing of the original charter, the other two (1124 and 1217) that of the transcription of the 1075 document. The original charter has not survived but its copy dated 1217 has. We also know, however, that the charter was interpolated twice (around 1237 and 1270) with such (forged) parts that had not been included in the Latin text in 1075 and the two copies (1124, 1217) were recorded only after the interpolation made around 1270. The charter from 1075 is known from the document made in the second half of the 13th century but dated 1217, thus only this document can serve as the basis of our studies in historical linguistics and onomastics (DHA 1: 204–205). The founding charter of the Benedictine Abbey of Garamszentbenedek includes approximately 250 records of altogether 152 places, from which around two thirds can be linked to the original, 11th-century layer of the charter.

2.1. The forest area and royal estate in Bars County, in the northern part of the Carpathian Basin (Gy. 1: 474, 425), is mentioned in the charter under the name of *Susolgi:* "dedi autem et terram in *Susolgi*" (DHA 1: 214)*.* The etymology of the *Susolgi* name is uncertain (cf. JUHÁSZ 1988: 98, TÓTH 2001: 234). Earlier, several scholars thought that the name might be associated with the name of the Saskő castle located nearby and it may be interpreted as *Sasal* (i.e., *Sas-alj*), the foot of Saskő, the area around Saskő (JUHÁSZ 1988: 98, FÉNYES 1851: 4, 17, KNAUZ 1890: 183, CSÁNKI 1925: 292). The basis of this interpretation is the presupposition that the castle and its name preceded the naming of the region. To be able to consider this theory, we need to briefly examine the history of the region and the castle, as well as the circumstances of name giving. The name of the region, according to the critical edition of the charter, belongs to the part of the charter written in the 11th century (DHA 1: 214). The royal forest estate to which the area named *Susolgi* in the founding charter also belonged was created at the end of the 12th century and disintegrated in the 14th century. During the donation of 13th-century royal estates this area came under the ownership of a noble family, and the castle named *Saskő* was built here between 1242 and 1253 (BOROVSZKY 1903: 303, Gy. 1: 417–420, KRISTÓ 2003: 79, TRINGLI 2009: 494).

Thus also considering the philological attributes of the Charter of Garamszent-benedek, the above-mentioned interpretation of the name has to be disregarded. The almost two centuries that passed between the first mention of the region in the charter and the building of the castle excludes the idea that the origin of the name of the region is the castle name built much later.

2.2. Besides the temporal difference between the mentions of the name of the region and the castle name, the structure of the name also contradicts the option of origination from the castle name. Oronyms played a major role in the creation of names of regions. When naming regions at the foot of mountains, hills, typically names with an oronym + *alj(a)* 'foot' structure were created (JUHÁSZ 1988: 26, 61, 90, RESZEGI 2011: 57). One of the characteristics of names of regions including the *alj(a)* lexeme is that these geographical common noun second constituents always create relative names of regions attached to the names of mountains, and at the same time, the mountain names used for the creation of the new name are mostly of a single-component.

The projection of these characteristics onto the *Susolgi – Saskő* name pair, however, is not without problems. On the one hand, it is a hindering factor that we are not aware whether the name of the *Saskő* castle was also used as the name of the mountain.[1] Talking about a mountain castle, it is possible, however that the mountain on which the castle was built also bore this name (cf. RESZEGI 2011: 98–100), the name structure strongly supports this idea. On the other hand, in the case of *Saskő,* we have a two-component and not a single-component name. Besides these (and beyond the phonological problems not discussed here) yet another factor makes the interpretation of the *Sasal* (i.e., 'foot of Eagle[-rock]') name uncertain. The first mention[2] of the name in the charter records the version of the name with a *-gy* formant as *[Sosolgy],* which form is not really compatible with the supposed meaning of the name as 'the foot of Saskő castle'. Although among the additional data there are also those without a formant, the *Sasal(j)* 'foot of/Sas' structure of the name clearly excludes the possibility of attaching a formant to it from a name typological perspective: the *alj* geographical common noun second constituent never takes the *-gy* toponymic formant.

2.3. In the next part, I would like to discuss the possible origin of the *Susolgi* name if it does not derive from the name of the castle. Besides the remnant in the founding charter, we may also encounter the *Susold* name form as the name

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[1] Although the *alj* lexeme was also often attached to castle names, as a result of this not names of regions but settlement names were created. This way of name giving was typical in the case of settlements established at the foot of castles (KMHsz. 1. *alj,* TÓTH 2008: 105).

[2] Due to the circumstances under which the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek survived, the form of the name recorded in the charter does not necessarily reflect the characteristics of the 11th century.

of a mountain (1237: sub monte *Susold,* ZalaOkl. 1: 14). The only difference between the two forms is the *-gy ~ -d* formants but this difference does not exclude the possibility of considering the name of the region and the name of the mountain to go back to the same etymon, as at the time both formants were typical topoformants and what is more, the name of region also has a *-d (-di)* form (1407: *Sosoldi,* DF 8). Besides these two toponymic records, we may also encounter this name form as an anthroponym (1086: *Susol,* DHA 1: 254, ÁSz. 737), thus we also have to discuss the possible association with the personal name when looking for explanations of the name.

Based on available data, the origin from an anthroponym may come up, however, this explanation appears to be problematic both in the case of the oronym and the name of the region. In the names of protrusions the perception of name giving using personal names and the possessive relationship serving as its basis is rather uncertain, even though there are oronyms including an anthroponym base word in Hungarian. In her monograph on Hungarian oronyms, KATALIN RESZEGI also mentions name forms possibly created from anthroponyms among both single- and two-component oronyms (2011: 138–139). She argues about oronyms with formants, however, that in the rich toponym corpus examined by her the topoformant only rarely attaches to proper names, i.e., toponyms and anthroponyms, and she is not aware of any oronyms formed from a personal name with a *-d* formant (2011: 152, 154). The explanation of names of regions with personal names is also problematic, as we are not aware of any names of regions formed from personal names. At the same time, among the names of regions the name forms created with the *-gy* and *-d* formants are also very rare (cf. JUHÁSZ 1988: 30–32).

In the case of the creation of names denoting natural phenomena with an identical form to a personal name, however, we may consider the possibility for multiple metonymy, i.e., the anthroponym > settlement name > name denoting natural phenomena change (GYŐRFFY 2004: 131, RESZEGI 2006: 165, 2011: 18). However, we may only take this option seriously if we can identify the settlement name which could serve as an "intermediary" name form between the personal name and the name of region. The *Susolul* data of a forged 1209 charter that has survived in a 17th-century copy (ÁÚO 6: 339) might provide this missing (settlement name) link; before the Hungarian toponym in this charter the *villa* Latin lexeme meaning 'village' appears as the type of place. This section thus preserves the name of the settlement and not the region.

Thus in conclusion about the explanation of the *Susolgi* name, we might claim that besides the temporal issues related to the establishment of the castle and the estate, the structural features of the name of the region do not support the former idea either that took the philological features of the Charter of Garamszentbenedek into consideration to a less extent and according to which the

name of the region could be formed from that of the castle. The possibility of the anthroponym > settlement name > name of region change seems to be more likely in connection with the name. As the name of the region appears not only in the version with a -*gy* formant analyzed here but also in a form identical to the personal name (1283: *Susol,* Gy. 1: 474, cf. SZŐKE 2015: 195).

3. The Benedictine Abbey of Pécsvárad was founded by Saint Stephen, however, the supposed 11th-century charter did not survive in its original form. The text of the charter of Pécsvárad dated to the 11th century was recorded in the 13th century (around 1220). This 13th-century forged document, however, did not survive to this day either only in the form of a multiple copy from the beginning of the 15th century (DHA 1: 63). This charter mentions 41 estates given to the abbey at the time of foundation. According to the critical edition, besides the 11th-century charter of St. Stephen there was also an 11th-century census of the abbey and these charters were used as sources at the time of the 13th-century forgery. These documents, however, did not survive independently, only as part of the forged charter. Based on the census from the 11th-century, we still have a good chance of assessing the estate stock of the abbey at the time of foundation. It supports the truthfulness of the estates named as 11th-century donations in the forged founding charter that the donations of rulers following the founder are also included in the forged charter, clearly distinguished from each other. A significant part of villages donated by the founder are included together with boundary descriptions, thus altogether there are around 130 toponyms in the text which from the perspective of historical toponomastics may be considered to be from the 11th century (GYÖRFFY 1969: 203, DHA 1: 70).[3]

3.1. The *Sorlogys* toponym appears in the charter in the boundary description of a settlement in Baranya County ("tricesimasecunda *Hirig* nominator, que ab oriente terminatur *Sorlogys,* ab austro *Sedfev,* ab occidente *Nogvt* et *Curtuelfa,* a septemtrione *Hudus*", DHA 1: 75). For a long time, this name of the charter could not be identified. GYÖRGY GYÖRFFY proposed that the name could preserve the proto-Hungarian and/or Bulgarian-Turkish *sorlogh* form of our *sarló* 'sickle' word and it may be identical to the older form of the *Sarlós* settlement name (today Magyarsarlós) located here (1977: 236, 1988: 21).

If from a linguistic perspective we could support it with additional evidence that the name form in the Founding Charter of Pécsvárad really is the oldest

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[3] In the case of charters with an uncertain linguistic status, I consider it important that we should examine their source value in historical toponomastics and historical linguistics separately although I also consider the problematics in historical toponomastics to be a part of analysis in historical linguistics. The source value of charters in historical toponomastics may be established based on the date of creation of the toponyms, while their source value in historical linguistics in consideration of their characteristics in terms of historical phonology and orthography.

known written form of the *Sarlós* toponym in Baranya County, as claimed by
GYÖRFFY, then this would also confirm the existence of the authentic charter
from the 11th century. At the same time, it would also confirm that we may look
for 11th-century traces in the recording of names also, i.e., forged founding
charters may be considered not only as sources of historical toponomastics but
also that of historical linguistics for the linguistic characterization of the 11th
century. At the beginning of the 12th century (1109) the settlement name already
appears in a *Serlous* form (DHA 1: 366).

The *Sarlós* toponyms were formed from the *sarló* common noun (for the ety-
mology of the common noun see WOT 2: 697–698, cf. also TESz., EWUng.
sarló). The *sarló* common noun is one of our Turkish loan words of the Chuvash
type from prior to the Hungarian Conquest (cf. e.g., BÁRCZI 1958: 73, 77,
BENKŐ 1967: 280–282, ZSILINSZKY 2005: 202, GERSTNER 2018: 252). The
most likely version is that the *sarló* word was either the borrowing of the Old
Turkic **šarlïγ ~ *šarlaγ* or **čarlaγ* (cf. TESz., WOT) and it was adapted to the
Hungarian language in *sorloγ* form.

3.2. Considering the *Sorlogys* remnant to be an earlier version of the *Sarlós*
name, in the early Old Hungarian Era it could sound like *[sorloγus].* In case it
is really *Sorlogys* in the charter, it may be supposed that the *y* marking of the
vowel before the formant could be the result of a spelling mistake, which could
enter the text either instead of *u* or *v,* as with regular sound changes we cannot
deduce the *Sarlós* form from *[sorlogis].*[4] The settlement name that sounded
like *[sorloγus]* could be created when the common noun serving as its basis
still had a *sorloγ* form. Later, when as a result of the vocalization of the voiced
velar spirant *(γ)* a diphthong *(sarlou)* or a long vowel formed from it *(sarló)*
was pronounced, the resulting settlement name formed also sounded like *[Sar-
lous]* or *[Sarlós]*. The *Serlous* (1109, DHA 1: 366) and *Sarlous* (1224/1399,
KMHsz. 1: 237) data of Magyarsarlós from a 12th–13th-century source may also
confirm such a change, as when recording the name forms, the *ou* sign may
mark a diphthong (or a long vowel formed from it).

Looking at this issue from a linguistic perspective, we may claim that the *Sor-
logys* name form (although presupposing a spelling mistake) may be an earlier
version of the *Sarlós* name. Had we disregarded the Founding Charter of Pécs-
várad as an early source of historical linguistics with reference to its 13th-century
origin, this early version of the toponym would not be known. After the founding
charter, the first known data of the settlement is from the early 12th century
(1109, DHA 1: 366). The analysis of the *Sorlogys* toponym proves it excellently

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[4] I have not yet had access to the photocopy of the charter, as the copy of the 1403 Bull of Pope
Boniface IX, from which the oldest text of the founding charter is known, may be found in the
Vatican Secret Archives (cf. DHA 1: 63).

that at the time of recording the forged charter in the 13th century authentic sources were used from the 11th century and a part of the names were copied to the new document without any changes.

3.3. The analysis of the toponym in the Charter of Pécsvárad that has been neglected due to its forged nature has also revealed additional new information. The Deed of Gift of Veszprémvölgy was written in Greek at the time of Saint Stephen or his father, Géza (dated prior to 1001 or 997) but its text has survived only from 1109, when at the time of King Coloman under the copy of the original Greek text the Latin version of the charter was also recorded on the same membrane. The Greek and Latin versions of the charter are both about the donation of nine villages but while in the Greek charter one of the nine villages donated is *Ζαλέση* (DHA 1: 85), in the Latin version we find the *Serlous* name instead: 1109: septima villa est *Serlous* (DHA 1: 366), +1109 [1280–95]: item dedit villam *Sorlous* (DHA 1: 380). This *Sarlós* is the same settlement from Baranya County (today's Magyarsarlós) that is included in the Charter of Pécsvárad as a boundary point (DHA 1: 75).

Scholarly publications almost unanimously identify the place mentioned in the Greek charter with Sarlós in Baranya County based on the *Serlous* remnant of the Latin renovation, i.e., with today's Magyarsarlós (cf. e.g. KARÁCSONYI 1891: 37, PAIS 1939: 37–40, Gy. 1: 376, KRISTÓ 1976: 71, GYÖRFFY 1977: 321).

There have been several opinions concerning the explanation of the *Ζαλέση* name of the Greek charter (cf. HÓMAN 1911: 132, MIKOS 1935: 118) , but the most likely is the origin from a Slavic toponym, i.e., the name form was created from the Slavic *za* 'behind, beyond' and *lěsъ* 'forest' words (MIKLOSICH 1886: 399, 167, PAIS 1939: 38). Such a toponym formed from a prepositional structure perfectly matches the Slavic settlement name system: cf. Czech *Záměl* '[place] behind the reef', Serb-Cro. *Zaslop* 'place behind waterfall, rapids', etc. (HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2018: 201–202). Toponym derivatives have been formed from the *lěsъ* lexeme also in several Slavic languages: cf. Czech *Zálesí,* Polish *Zalesie* (VASMER 1941: 34, ŠMILAUER 1970: 112). Based on the work of DEZSŐ PAIS, the Slavic origin of the name has been accepted by many (cf. GYÖRFFY 1977: 321, 1994: 20, KRISTÓ 2000: 19–20, 2005: 121, GÁBOR 2008: 9).

The toponym appearing in the Greek founding charter is most likely a settlement name of Slavic origin that has not become a permanent element of the Hungarian toponymic system. The name usage in the Latin renovation of the Deed of Gift of Veszprémvölgy indicates that in the 12th century the place had already been referred to with the *Sarlós* name. The *Sorlogys* name of the Charter of Pécsvárad, at the same time, indicates that in the first half of the 11th century the settlement could have a Slavic and a Hungarian name simultaneously, later, however, there is no trace of the Slavic form in sources.

4. I wanted to show with the analysis of names in the interpolated Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek and the forged Charter of Pécsvárad that the analysis of charters with an uncertain linguistic status may bring such information to the surface also in the case of etymology that we have not possessed before and which may shed new light on ideas considered to be likely before. I think that these two examples prove it well how important it is to consider the toponyms of as many charters that have been neglected so far in linguistic analysis as possible when conducting historical linguistic analysis in general and etymological studies in particular.

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Abstract

Foreign texts containing Hungarian words are indisputably important sources of data for the study of early periods of Old Hungarian. Only a few charters have survived from the 11th century, an era marking the beginning of Hungarian literacy. Medieval charters contain several place names that still have not been explained in detail. Moreover, linguists have studied primarily those early charters that were also authenticated. I believe that besides the low number of authentic sources from this early period, those of uncertain authenticity (e.g., transcripts and false charters) should also be studied. My paper focuses on two examples from 11th-century charters to illustrate how the unique philological situation of interpolated and forged charters may help us make etymological knowledge more accurate, using the Founding Charter of Garamszentbenedek *(Susolgi)* and the Charter of Pécsvárad *(Sorlogys)*.