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Changes in Settlement Names Referring to the Natural Environment*

1. Settlement names referring to the natural environment—unlike the other two types of settlement names which express a specific feature, namely those referring to the human environment (e.g., based on a personal name, tribe's name, ethnonym, occupational name, etc.) and those indicating human activities (referring to residential buildings, mines, markets, etc.)—are related to places and entities that exist independently from human activity. In semantic and lexical-morphological terms, the various groups of settlement names that refer to local and general geographical circumstances (e.g., hydronyms, oronyms, names of a forest, plant, animal, etc.) are closely related to other types of names, thus their study may also provide important information on these different name types.

General questions related to settlement names which refer to the natural environment rarely appear in Hungarian scholarly literature. The relationship between hydronyms and settlement names has received the most attention in Hungarian onomastics (cf. BENKŐ 1947, 2003, BÍRÓ 2005, GYÖRFFY 2011: 153–164 etc.). Seeing this, I started to study the settlement names referring to the natural environment, which is also closely related to microtoponyms, in order to get a more precise understanding of their general characteristics (cf. KOVÁCS 2018, 2019a, 2019b, 2021).

In this paper, I examine the extent to which this type of name is affected by the typical linguistic changes of settlement names.¹ The main question is whether settlement names referring to the natural environment are resistant to linguistic and underlying social (etc.) changes or if they easily fall victim to modifications. In order to address these issues, an abundant historical onomastic corpus which covers the whole area of Hungarian Language is needed. I compiled this corpus, using various sources (e.g., KMHsz. 1., HA. 1–4., Gy. 1–4., Cs. 1–5., KOCÁN 2017, KENYHERCZ n. d., MÁLYUSZ 1922/2014, NÉMETH 1997, 2008, BOROVSZKY Pozsony, Somogy, Temes, Torontál, Vas and Zemplén County volumes), and created a database which currently consisting of 2,193 records. This corpus serves as the basis of my study.

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¹ I refer to changes in settlement names in the sense defined by VALÉRIA TÓTH (2008).



In the toponym corpus, consisting of 2,193 records from the early Old Hungarian Era, only 5% of the names have undergone some kind of structural change. By extending the chronological boundaries of the Early Old Hungarian Era (896–1350), I was able to register an additional 57 changes in settlement names referring to the natural environment (based on examples from TÓTH's work on the typology of change, 2008).

Toponyms can be studied based on the relationship of their two components, name form, and meaning. The regularities of the changes in name form can be identified primarily in the alterations of the lexical-morphological (and sometimes the related functional-semantic) structure, while changes of meaning may be discovered through the changes in the denotative meaning. We can distinguish between formal changes (e.g. extension, reduction, and name replacement, etc.), semantic changes (e.g. extension of meaning, narrowing of meaning, etc.) and complex changes (e.g. name differentiation, name integration, etc. (cf. TÓTH 2008, HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017: 237–253). Factors that influence the susceptibility of settlement names to changes and trigger the actual changes of specific names can be varied and include external (extra-linguistic) motivations (e.g., changes in landowners or in ethnic composition) just as much as linguistic (intra-linguistic) causes. The social prevalence of the names, their etymological identifiability, the intention to avoid settlement name polysemy and homonymy, and analogy (the effect of name models) all play an important role as linguistic factors inducing changes in settlement names. These causes usually do not emerge isolated from one another and we can consider the presence of several influencing factors simultaneously in the background of most changes. From these established drivers of change, the adaptation to name models might be the most intense (cf. HOFFMANN–RÁCZ–TÓTH 2017: 240).

In this paper, these types of changes have been introduced in the order of frequency that they appear in the name corpus. We can not find semantic changes among settlement names referring to the natural environment. The internal proportions of these changes are visualized in Figure 1, which also includes the statistics of changes after the Early Old Hungarian Era.

2. We can clearly see that the most common changes in this group of settlement names are changes which affect the form of the name.

2.1. In almost two thirds (61%) of the settlement names that have undergone a change, we can observe a modification of the lexical-morphological structure of the name body: growth by a name element (extension) or a decrease by a name element (reduction) is what mostly modifies the structure of the settlement names referring to the natural environment.



Extension with a formative element primarily affects 26% of the names.

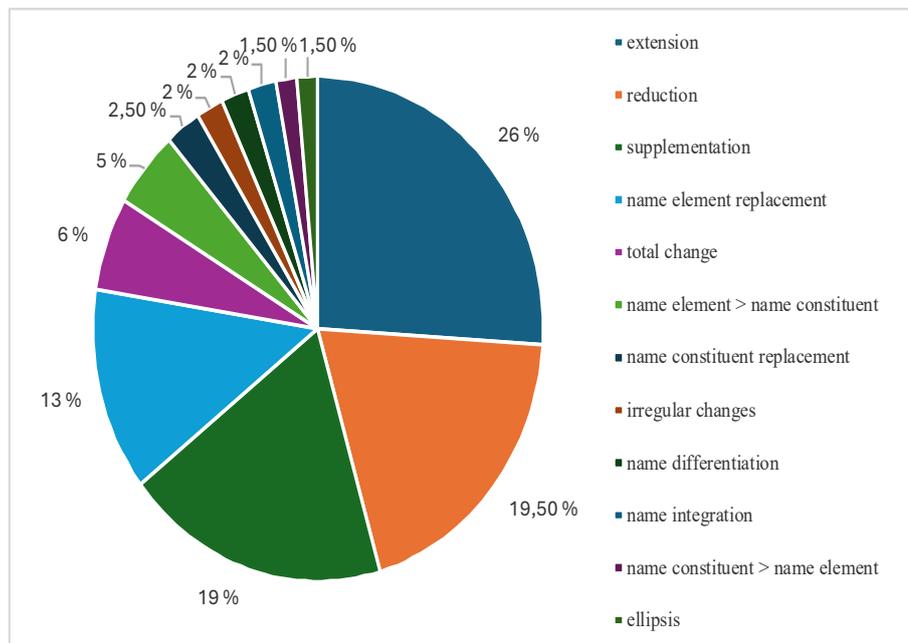


Figure 1. Changes in settlement names referring to the natural environment.

The most common topoformant is *-d*: *Árpa* (*+1214/1334: *Arpa*, villa, Gy. 1: 595) > *Árpád* (1326: *Arpad*, villa, Gy. 1: 595), cf. *árpa* ‘barley’ + *-d*; *Diós* (1330: *Gyous* ~ *Gyows*, possessio, Gy. 1: 854) > *Diósd* (1331: *Gyosd*, possessio, Gy. 1: 854), cf. *dió* ‘walnut’ + *-d*; *Farkas* (1113: *Forcas*, villa, Gy. 4: 383) > *Farkasd* (+1278 [XIV.]: *Farkasd*, possessio, Gy. 4: 383), cf. *farkas* ‘wolf’ + *-d*; *Szamár* (1208: *Samar*, villa, Cs. 4: 210) > *Szamárd* (1245: *Zamard*, villa, Cs. 4: 211), cf. *szamár* ‘donkey’ + *-d*.

The *-s* suffix is found in the following settlement names: *Alma* (1211/1252: *Alma*, Gy. 1: 270) > *Almás* (1338: *Almas*, Gy. 1: 270), cf. *alma* ‘apple’ + *-s*; *Körtvély* (1208/1359: *Kurtuel*, villa ~ *Kurthuel*, Gy. 4: 155) > *Körtvélyes* ([1273–90]: *Curtueles*, villa ~ *Curtuelus*, Gy. 4: 155), cf. *körtvély* ‘pear’ + *-s*.

The *-i* suffix is attached to the settlement names *Ér* (*1214/1550: *Her*, predium, Gy. 1: 615) > *Éri* (1326: *Eery*, possessio ~ *Ery*, Gy. 1: 615), cf. *ér* ‘brook’ + *-i*; *Parlag* (1330: *Parlag*, possessio, Gy. 3: 231) > *Parlagi* (1332: *Parlagy*, possessio, Gy. 3: 231), cf. *parlag* ‘unploughed land’ + *-i*.

The *-ka/-ke* suffix is attached to settlement names less frequently and clearly at a much later time: *Eperjes* (1438: *Eperjes*, Cs. 1: 513) > *Eperjeske* (1773: *Eperjeske*, TÓTH 2008: 125), cf. *eperj* ‘strawberry’ + *-ke*; *Mogyorós* (1363:



Monyoros, Cs. 1: 357) > *Mogyoróska* (1773: *Mogyoroska*, TÓTH 2008: 125), cf. *mogyoró* ‘hazelnut’ + *-ka*.

The extension could also take place with a possessive suffix: *Árok* (1301: *Arok*, Gy. 3: 40, 67) > *Árka* (1302: *Arka*, Gy. 3: 67), cf. *árok* ‘trench’ + *-a* Sg3.poss. suffix; *Sólyomtelek* (1331/1334: *Solumtelek*, Gy. 3: 131) > *Sólyomtelke* (1475: *Solyomtheleke*, TÓTH 2008: 128), cf. ‘falcon + village’ + *-e* Sg3.poss. suffix.

Certain settlement names were expanded by a lexeme-size name element: *Boldva* ([1295]: possessio et castrum *Boldua*, Gy. 1: 70) > *Boldvakő* (1300: *Bolduaku*, Gy. 1: 70), cf. toponym *Boldva* + *kő* ‘stone’; *Hangony* (1214: *Hongun*, praedium, Gy. 2: 503) > *Hangonyvölgye* (1327: *Hangunuulge*, possessio, Gy. 2: 503), cf. toponym *Hangony* + *völgy* ‘valley’.

We are fortunate that changes are so well documented in charters. However, in many cases, the direction of change is very difficult to determine. Drawing the evolutionary line of synchronic name variants is made more difficult by the emergence of formal variants with short temporal differences, and we often also need to consider the influence of intersecting processes of change (cf. TÓTH 2008: 58). However, the uniformity of the later forms in several cases makes it possible to determine the likely direction of change.

However, it is also worth considering that the suffixes may have also been associated with the microtoponyms that served as the basis of settlement names. In the early Old Hungarian Era, for example, 9.5% of the names of rivers were formed with toponym formants (e.g. *Almás*: 1009/+1205–1235//1404: *Almas*; *Kövesd*: 1303: *Kuesd*, cf. GYÖRFFY 2011: 113–114), and there are also forms with suffixes among the names of mountains (pl. *Kövesd*: 1055: *cuesti*; *Nádasd*: 1389: *Nadasd*, cf. RESZEGI 2011: 152, 156). It should also be considered that structural changes are also typical of microtoponyms, including examples of expansion discussed here (for hydronyms, see GYÖRFFY 2011: 113–114, for oronyms see RESZEGI 2011: 166–169). Thus in such cases we can expect to encounter several processes of change, such as in the case of *Alma* > *Almás*: 1) (*alma* ‘apple’ plant name >) *Alma* hydronym > *Almás* hydronym > *Almás* settlement name, 2) (*alma* ‘apple’ plant name >) *Alma* hydronym > *Alma* settlement name > *Almás* settlement name.

It is, however, very difficult to determine whether the creation of the name with the suffix resulting in the name variant occurred in the case of settlement names or in the case of microtoponyms

In 19.5% of the settlement names that have undergone a change, we can identify reduction, i.e., a decrease with a lexeme, which was mostly achieved by dropping a topoformant: *Fertőd* (1234: *Ferteud*, villa, Cs. 3: 608) > *Fertő* (1265: *Ferteu*, villa, Cs. 3: 608), cf. *fertő* ‘marshy lake’; *Monyorósd* (1270:



Monorosd ~ *Monyorosd*, Cs. 2: 777) > *Monyorós* (1295: *Monorous*, possessio, Cs. 2:777), cf. *mogyoró* ‘hazelnut’; *Haraszi* (1342: *Harazty*, possessio, KMHsz. 1: 122) > *Haraszt* (1347: *Harazth*, KMHsz. 1: 122), cf. *haraszt* ‘kind of oak tree’; *Kórógy* (*1323: *Chorog*, Gy. 1: 635) > *Kóró* (1335: *Chorow*, KMHsz. 1: 160), cf. *kóró* ‘a piece of wood’.

The dropping of the suffix may also occur in the first constituent of compound names: *Szilibács* (1263/1466/1476: *Zyli Bach*, Gy. 1: 235) > *Szilbács* (1267: *Scylbach*, Gy. 1: 235), cf. *szil* ‘elm’ + toponym *Bács*.

The reduction of the possessive suffix can be seen in the following names: *Csabkuta* (1330: *Chobkuta*, Gy. 1: 292) > *Csabkút* (1341: *Chapkwth*, villa, Gy. 1: 292), cf. personal name *Csab* + *kút* ‘well-spring’; *Péterréve* (+1092/+1274//1399: *Peterreue*, villa, DHA. 285) > *Péterrév* (+1247/+1284/1572: *Peturreu*, Gy. 1: 230), cf. personal name *Péter* + *rév* ‘water crossing point’. The existence of these synchronic linguistic variants is attested by the charters themselves, but it is not easy to determine the direction of their historical change. The following cases are even more uncertain than those above: *Érd* ([1243]: *Erdu*, villa, Gy. 4: 570) ~ *Érdi* (1243: *Erđi*, Gy. 4: 570), cf. *ér* ‘brook’; *Farkasföld* (1324/1392: *Farkasfeld*, Gy. 2: 620) ~ *Farkasfölda* (1324/1361: *Farkasfeulde*, Gy. 2: 620), cf. ‘wolf + land’.

The lexical elements of settlement names may also be dropped. Both the first and second lexemes may be dropped in the names of settlements which are formed by way of metonymic name giving from two-constituent microtoponyms and thus qualifying as single-constituent names: *Hódostó* (1219/550: *Hodosto*, villa, NÉMETH 2008: 113–114) cf. ‘beaver + lake’ > *Hódos* (1328: *Hudus*, NÉMETH 2008: 114); *Örvényesligete* (1336: *Wrwenusligethe*, TÓTH 2008: 100) cf. ‘whirlpool + grove’ > *Örvényes* (1360: *Ewrwenes*, TÓTH 2008: 100).

In 13% of the names there was a name element change, mainly a change of a suffix. The most frequent change in the toponym corpus I have analyzed — and among the names of settlements in general (cf. TÓTH 2008: 135–136) — seems to be the change of the name of a settlement with a primarily *-gy* suffix to *-d*, e.g. *Nyárágy* (1238/1377: *Narrag*, terra, Gy. 1: 793) > *Nyárád* (1317: *Narad*, villa, Gy. 1: 793), cf. *nyárfa* ‘poplar’ + topoformants; *Debregy* (1255: *Debregy*, Gy. 1: 76) > *Debrőd* (1427: *Debred*, Cs. 1: 205), cf. *debrő* ‘valley’ + topoformants. There are also examples of change in the opposite direction: *Nyárád* (+1093/404: *Narad*, DHA. 294) > *Nyárágy* (1270: *Narag*, Gy. 1: 349), cf. *nyárfa* ‘poplar’ + topoformants; *Sasad* (1236/1286//1504: *Sassard*, Gy. 4: 694) > *Sáságy* (1291: *Sassag*, Gy. 4: 694), cf. *sás* ‘sedges’ + topoformants. However, as we have seen with the previous types, the direction of change cannot always be determined clearly. Based on data, it is often difficult to



establish the actual use of the names and the scope and time of their use (cf. TÓTH 2008: 137–138).

The replacement of other suffixes is less common: *Mogyoród* ~ *Mogyorós* (1269/1294: *Munorod* ~ *Munoros*, Gy. 1: 299), cf. *mogyoró* ‘hazelnut’ + topoformants; *Örvénd* (1282: *Vluend*, Gy. 1: 649) > *Örvényes* (1360: *Ewruenes*, Cs. 1: 599), cf. *örvény* ‘whirlpool’ + topoformants.

Name element replacement as a type of change may more rarely also affect the lexeme component of the settlement name: *Hévszamos* (1448: *Hewzamus*, FNEsz. 2: 118), cf. ‘heat + hydronym *Szamos*’ > *Melegsamos* (1733: *Meleg Szamos*, TÓTH 2008: 131), cf. ‘hot + hydronym *Szamos*’. Some of the changes in fact indicate naming based on a different type of place. In the case of *Hidegséd* (1291: *Hydegsed*, Cs. 2: 756), cf. ‘cold + small river’ > *Hidegkút* (1346: *Hideghkwt*, cf. TÓTH 2008: 133), cf. ‘cold + well/spring’ the name of a river or a spring has served as the metonymic basis for the names of settlements with similar semantics. In one case, we may observe the replacement of a lexemic name element and a formative element: *Almatöve* (+1183/1326/1363: *Almatui*, Gy. 1: 270), cf. ‘apple + estuary’ > *Almás* (1338: *Almas*, Gy. 1: 270), cf. ‘apple’ + -s suffix.

Only a few settlement names (2.5%) are affected by the replacement of name constituents with a functional role. The switching of the second constituent of the name, indicating a type, took place in the following cases: *Árpádfölde* ([1332]>1412: *Arpadfelde*, Gy. 3: 404), cf. personal name *Árpád/föld* + ‘land’ > *Árpatelekek* (1415: *Arpatelekek*, TÓTH 2008: 145), cf. personal name *Árpa/telek* + ‘land, village’; *Tengerfalva* (1418: *Thengerfalva*, Cs. 1: 219) cf. ‘water/sea + village’ > *Tengerlaka* (1420: *Tengerlaka*, Cs. 1: 219) cf. ‘water/sea + village’.

2.2. Less than a quarter of the settlement names referring to the natural environment have undergone a change affecting their syntactic structure (i.e., not only their lexical-morphological but also their functional-semantic structure). 15% of the settlement names received a name component with a functional role, a geographical common noun second constituent or an attributive first constituent (supplementation).

The settlement names referring to the natural environment that have undergone change were mostly expanded with a geographical common noun second constituent meaning ‘settlement’ (11%): *Erdő* (1221/1550: Nic. de villa *Erdei*, Gy. 1: 77), cf. ‘forest’ > *Erdőfalva* (1272>1344: *Erdeufalua*, Gy. 1: 77), cf. ‘forest + village’; *Vadas* (1227: *Wodos*, terra, Cs. 3: 634), cf. ‘wild’ > *Vadasfalva* (1280: *Vadosfolua*, terra, Cs. 3: 634), cf. ‘wild + village’; *Erdő* (1215/5150: *Erdev*, Gy. 3: 90), cf. ‘forest’ > *Erdőtelek* (1322: *Erdeutheluk*, Cs. 1: 61), cf. ‘forest + village’; *Mák* ([1278]/1278: *Mak*, Gy. 3: 114), cf. ‘poppy-



seed' > *Mákegyháza* (1456: *Maakeghaza*, TÓTH 2008: 73), cf. 'poppy-seed + village'; *Almás* (1234/XV.: *Almas*, terra, Gy. 1: 593) > *Almásmonostora* ([1291–1294]: *Almasmunustura*, Gy. 1: 593), cf. 'apple + village'; *Árok* (1301: *Aruk*, Gy. 3: 67), cf. 'trench' > *Árokszállás* (1396: *Arukzallas*, TÓTH 2008: 72), cf. 'trench + village'.

The addition of a name constituent with an attributive role is much rarer (4%). The first name part of the qualifying attributive structure created by the change is mainly used to express a particular feature of the settlement: *Büked* (1208/1395: *Bucchid* ~ *Bucehid*, terra, Gy. 1: 714) > *Kerekbüked* (1347: *Kerekbeuked*, possessio, Cs. 2: 195), cf. 'round + beech'; *Mohi* (1295: *Muhy*, Gy. 1: 462) > *Árkosmohi* (1325>1416: *Arkusmahy* ~ *Arkusmohy*, possessio, Gy. 1: 462), cf. 'trench + moss'. The first constituent of the name of the settlement of *Szentbenedekharaszi* (1342: *Zenbeneduk Harazthy*, possessio < 1333: *Harazthi*, possessio ~ *Harazthy* 'a kind of oak tree', Gy. 1: 719, KMHsz. 1: 256) may refer to the church built in honor of the patron saint (*Szentbenedek* '(church) consecrated in honor of Saint Benedict'). It can be seen from the above that the addition of a distinctive attribute plays only a minor role in the case of settlement names referring to the natural environment, unlike, for example, the much higher proportion of patrociny (30%) and tribal name origin settlement names (87%) which have undergone this structural change (cf. TÓTH 2008: 236, 237). This is explained by the fact that, in the case of the latter types of names, there were a large number of settlements with the same name, even in close proximity to each other, which needed to be distinguished, while there was a much lower rate of identical names among the settlement names formed from microtoponyms.

The change in the opposite direction, i.e., the omission of the functional part of the name, here in all cases the geographical common noun second constituent (ellipsis), is less characteristic of settlement names referring to the natural environment (1.5%): *Dióstelek* (1330: *Gyosteluk*, possessio, KMHsz. 1: 83), cf. 'walnut + village' > *Diós* (1342: *Gyoos*, possessio, KMHsz. 1: 83), cf. 'walnut' + -s suffix.

In 5% of the names in the toponym corpus I examined, such a change occurred whereby a linguistic element without a name constituent role was replaced by one in a functional role. The following settlement names may be mentioned among the name element > name constituent type of changes: *Egerd* ([1295–1299]: *Egurd*, Gy. 3: 552), cf. *éger* 'alder' + -d suffix > *Egervár* (1347: *Egurwar*, TÓTH 2008: 89–90), cf. 'alder + village'; *Hodosd* ([1177]>1405: *Hvdust*, Gy. 1: 178), cf. *hód* 'beaver' + -d suffix > *Hodosmonostora* (1293: *Hudusmonostura*, t., Gy. 1: 178), cf. 'beaver + village'; *Ökörd* (1259: *Vkurd*,



t., Gy. 4: 535), cf. *ökör* ‘ox’ + *-d* suffix > *Ökörtelek* (1352: *Vkurteluk*, p., Gy. 4: 535), cf. ‘ox + village’.

Even less frequent (1.5%) in this name type is the change in the opposite direction, the switching of the name constituent > name element: *Komlóstelek* (1404: *Komlostelek*, Cs. 1: 354), cf. ‘hop + village’ > *Komlóska* (1773: *Komloska*, TÓTH 2008: 93), cf. *komló* ‘hop’ + *-ka* suffix; *Nyírtelek* (1300: *Nyirtelek*, TÓTH 2008: 93), cf. ‘birch + village’ > *Nyíri* (1322: *Nyry*, TÓTH 2008: 93), cf. *nyír* ‘birch’ + *-i* suffix.

2.3. In addition to the regular formal changes already mentioned, irregular structural changes may also be found in the settlement names referring to the natural environment, but their proportion is very small (2%). From the primary, lexically non-transparent Slavic origin of the name *Zsábokrék*² (1282: *Zabakrek*, FNEsz. 2: 814) from Turóc County a *Zsámbokrét* (1292: *Sabochret*, MÁLYUSZ 1922/2014: 79) form was created as a result of linguistic awareness. Due to this modification, resemantisation, the name form has acquired identifiability on a lexical-morphological level and a degree of motivation from a functional-semantic perspective (for this phenomenon see TÓTH 2008: 165–178). *Kőkút* (1263/16th century: *Kewkwth*, cf. ‘stone + well/spring’) with its clear lexical and semantic structure, was also transformed into *Kékkút* (1569: *kek kwth*, FNEsz. 1: 707, cf. ‘colour blue + well/spring’) which is also identifiable and phonetically close to the original name form, as a result of the trans-semantic change (cf. TÓTH 2008: 179).

2.4. Around 6% of the names of settlements referring to the natural environment have undergone a total change, i.e., a name replacement. The name *Disznó* (cf. ‘pig’) in the Founding Charter of Tihany (1055: *gisnav*) was replaced by the name *Apáti* (cf. ‘abbot’s’) after the donation, referring to the new owner (cf. HOFFMANN 2010: 98–99). For a while, the two names lived side by side (1267/1296: *Gesnov* vel *Apathy*, Cs. 2: 587), before the latter pushed out the primary form (1275, 1536: *Apaty*, Cs. 2: 587). Similarly, settlement names referring to the natural environment may have been replaced by names referring to the human or built environment: *Erdőfalva* (1272>1344: *Erdeufalua*, Gy. 1: 77) ‘forest + village’ > *Didic* (1329/1406/1489: *Dydych*, terra, Gy. 1: 77), cf. personal name *Didic*; *Tyukod* (1235-70>1331: *Tyukud*, possessio, Gy. 3: 107), cf. ‘hen’ + *-d* suffix > *Kerekudvar* (1324/1343: *Keregduar* ~ *Kerekwdwar*, Gy. 3: 107), cf. ‘round + courtyard’.



² According to the latest research, the Czech compound toponyms *Žabokřík*, *Žabokrk* reflect frogs’ croaks and originally referred to ponds, marshes and other places abundant in frogs (cf. ŠTĚPÁN 2019: 59).

The following examples indicate the simultaneous use of name forms: *Hagymás* cf. ‘onion’ ~ *Désfalva* cf. ‘personal name *Dés* + village’ ([1270-72]>1372: *Hagmas* alio nomine *Desfolua* (Gy. 3: 551, 553); *Órhalom* (*1310>1358: *Herholm*, Gy. 2: 80) cf. ‘guard + hill’ ~ *Márkháza* (1318: *Markhaza*, villa; 1348: *Eurholm* ... alio nomine *Markhaza*, Gy. 2: 80) cf. ‘personal name *Márk* + village’.

However, the synonymous relationship did not always lead directly to a name replacement (cf. TÓTH 2008: 63). The two denominations of the same place may be identified behind the compound name of *Rikács(i)ártánd* in the Garamszentbenedek Founding Charter (1075/+1124/+1217: *RikachiArtand*, SZŐKE 2015: 190). The most recent research shows that when the charter was subsequently supplemented, the charter writers added the new *Ártánd* name (+1214/1334: *Artandi*, [1291–1294], 1332–1337/PR., 1517, 1587, 1598: *Artand*, 1332–1337/PR., 1517, 1588: *Arthand*, possessio, cf. *ártány* ‘barrow’ + *-d* suffix) to the original name of *Rikács*, rather than replacing it with it (cf. SZŐKE 2015: 190–191). Later, however, as the above data also show, the latter name form became the only name of the settlement.

Name replacement is therefore less common among the settlement names referring to the natural environment studied here (6%). For example, this change does not occur at all in the group of settlement names originating from names of tribes but makes up 36% in the group of patrociny names (cf. TÓTH 2008: 236, 237).

3. Among the settlement names referring to the natural environment, in addition to the above-mentioned formal changes, a change affecting the denotative meaning of the names is found in 4% of cases. The name differentiation and name integration recorded in the toponym corpus examined were mainly due to changes in the history of the settlement. The former settlement of *Szurdok* (1234/1243: *Zurdok*, Gy. 1: 150) merged with the nearby settlement of *Bénye* (1293/1496: *Benye*, Gy. 1: 150) and this is how the common name *Szurdokbénye* (1326/1375: *Zudukbenye* ~ *Zurdukbenye*, possessio, Gy. 1: 149–150) was created. Similarly, the merging of the settlements *Harsány* and *Kér* (1267: *Horsan* et *Keer*, KMHsz. 1: 124) resulted in the settlement name of *Harsánykér* (1297/1424/1783: *Harsankér*, p., Gy. 1: 221, 223). The first constituents referring to the natural environment thus performed the same function in the new compound name as well.

The following changes can perhaps be interpreted as an opposite process, a name differentiation: an independent village was established from *Árpád* (1181: *Arpad*, Gy. 1: 271, cf. *árpa* ‘barley’ + *-d*) settlement under the name of *Olaszárpad* (1332–1335/PR.: Jo. de *Arpad Gallico* ~ *Holas Arpad*, Gy. 1: 271, KMHsz. 1: 18, cf. ‘ethnonym *Olasz* + settlement name *Árpád*’).



4. Overall, it can be stated that the sensitivity to change of early Old Hungarian settlement names referring to the natural environment is very low (5%). We can see an even smaller proportion (4%) if we consider changes that can be explained by purely linguistic reasons. According to VALÉRIA TÓTH, “name replacement or supplementation with an attributive first constituent is not primarily due to linguistic reasons, but to the circumstances of reality (or more precisely, the changes that occurred in them” (2008: 236). In comparison with other name types, we can see that this 4% susceptibility to linguistic change is higher than that of names originating from names of tribes (maximum 1%), but much lower than the 17% rate for patrociny settlement names (see TÓTH 2008: 238). Overall, names which refer to the natural environment are less affected by the typical linguistic changes in place-names. Therefore, toponyms referring to the natural environment are characterized by a certain degree of consistency.

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Abstract

In this paper I examine the extent to which settlement names referring to the natural environment are influenced by changes in the linguistic subsystem of settlement names. The key question is if this name type is resistant to (linguistic and underlying social, etc.) changes, or they are prone to modification. In the examined name corpus consisting of 2,193 settlement names from the Old Hungarian Era (11–14th centuries), only 5% of the names went through some kind of a structural change. Toponyms may be studied based on the relationship of their two components, name form and meaning. The regularities of the changes in name form can be identified primarily in the alterations of the lexical-morphological (and sometimes the related functional-semantic) structure, while changes of meaning may be discovered through the changes in the denotative meaning. We can distinguish between formal changes (e.g. extension, reduction, and name replacement, etc.), complex changes (e.g. name differentiation, name integration, etc.) and semantic changes (e.g. extension of meaning, narrowing of meaning, etc.). In my paper I introduce these types of changes in the order of frequency as they appear in the name corpus.

Keywords: settlement names, natural environment, changes in the linguistic system, early Old Hungarian Era

