

Edit Belényesyne Sárosi

TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE IN  
THE TERRITORY BETWEEN THE DANUBE AND **TISZA**  
RIVERS:  
MONOSTOR- A CASE STUDY

MA. Thesis in Medieval Studies

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I, the undersigned, Edit Belényesyné Sárosi, candidate for the M.A. degree in Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Edit Belényesyné Sárosi', written over a horizontal line.

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## Abstract

This thesis aims to complete the complex medieval topography of a specially chosen micro- region, namely *Monostor* estate, in the central part of the Danube Tisza Interfluvium region, in the western part of the large geographical unit, namely the Kiskunság Loess Plain. The territory appears as an administrative unit from its earliest depictions on maps, and it can be supposed that this estate can be more or less identical with the *possessio Monostor* mentioned by medieval, early modern and modern sources. Through this, a well definable area was chosen, what can be taken at the same time as a geographical micro-region.

This area is not a favorable topic for investigations of settlement structure of medieval Hungary. Although problems of topography have been studied in scholarship for over one hundred years, the modern, interdisciplinary topography of this territory has never been made. Regional studies have been published about this part of the country, but mainly focusing on historical questions. More archaeological research was carried out by Kálmán Szabó in the 1930s, but thereafter hardly any investigations of this kind can be mentioned, except for rescue excavations. Even the large scale archaeological-topographical project, the Archaeological Topography of Hungary (*Magyarország Régészeti Topográfiája*) did not reach the region. The studied micro-region was selected upon two basic criteria: on the one hand it has twofold importance concerning topography: the work aimed at discussing the scholarly debate around the kindred monastery of *Peter-* and *Pálmonostora*. It was a very important task for the study to solve the problem if there were two monasteries in close vicinity, or, to prove, what seemed to be more reliable, that only one monastery existed there, which might have been devoted to both St. Peter and Paul. This area was chosen to be a sample area for a basic study, to show, by what means, by what methods a topographical research can bring results. At the same time, the territory was used to exemplify how and what kind of methods work there, in what forms and to what extent they can be used. The thesis could not undertake to complete and detailed history of the whole region basing on contemporary sources, but the investigation

tried to collect and apply all the available methods on the chosen micro-region to outline its historical topography. Basically three types of information were used: data from contemporary historical sources, analysis of maps, and archaeological information. For lack of written documents, special stress was put on archaeological methods, such as fieldwork and interpreting aerial photos.

The research yielded the identification of several traces of medieval settlements in the study area. Archaeological fieldwalking showed that in this part of the country, conditions of natural endowment not only influence, but determine the place of the settlements as well as the road structure among them. The research proved that during the centuries the places that were suitable for living, were situated above the sea-level of 102,50m. Probably this elevation shows the level of temporary bodies of water, even in the Modern Period farmsteads were built above this height. Archaeological material of more periods was found, namely Prehistory, the Roman Period (Sarmatian), the Arpadian Age and the Late Medieval periods. Traces of settlement had three major cores in the area. Two villages were located in the area: the settlement of *Alsómonostor* probably existed up to the mid-fourteenth century, while the village of *Felsőmonostor* was probably the more important micro-center of the territory according to archaeological material found at the site this place was inhabited throughout the Middle Ages. Also the parish church of both villages were identified.

Although contemporary sources mention separately the names of *Pétermonostora* and *Pdlmonostora*, there is a strong debate, whether two or only one monastery existed in the area. After collecting available comparative material it can only be presumed not stated that in the Arpadian Age in *Csongrád* County there was only one monastery founded by the *Becse-Gergely* kindred, which was devoted to St Peter and St Paul. For some unknown reasons the whole title of the monastery does not appear in the sources. The study showed that both church ruins depicted on historical maps were rather parish churches of villages, neither of them can be identified with the church of the monastery at this stage of research as it was presumed in previous scholarly literature. Finally, after detailed and comparative analysis of available sources, maps and archaeological material the location of the monastery is still unknown. Nevertheless, further investigations, fieldwalk surveys may destroy or support this theory; but until the appearance and identification of ruins

the problem of location cannot be solved, and the possibility that two monasteries existed separately cannot be precluded.

In conclusion, the results of the research justified that through complex and detailed analysis of available sources, not only the historical settlement structure and its transformations can be outlined of the territory that is without written sources concerning settlements, but other aspects, such as medieval road structure, historical conditions of nature can be studied. Finally, however several questions were let open in connection with the monastery, the research made clear that the applied methods can be used, and worth to be used in the chosen micro-region, therefore made the grounds of the larger project of the proposed Ph.D. dissertation.

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2. Map Collection of the National Széchenyi Library of Hungary. TK 1086. *Mappa unitorum comitatum Pesthiensis Pilisiensis et Solthiensis non unius districtum Cumanorum minorum.* (cartographer unknown). 1740.
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Abbreviations:

DIAM.: = Diameter

c. = century

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1. Rim and handle of a kettle. Dark red, inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Slow thrown. The rim is squared and everted. Round hole on the handle, where the vessel is thickened. Parallel decorative incised lines bellow the rim.

Diam.: 25 cm Date: 13-14th c.

Site 2, from the settlement

2. Body shred of a pot. Dark brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and small pebbles . The outer side is decorated with an incised wave.

Diam.: ? Date: 13thc.

Site 2., from the settlement.

3. Base of a glass. White, well-formed, inclusion of sand is added. Hand wheeled, the outer part is covered with ivory engobe. With soot traces on both sides. No decoration.

Diam.: 6 cm Date: 15th c.

Site 4.

4. Body part of a vessel. Dark grey, inclusion of small pebbles and graphite. Hand-formed.

Date: 14th c.(?)

Site 2., from the settlement.

5. Neck sherd of a pot. White, well formed, inclusion of small pebbles .Hand thrown.  
Traces of soot on the outer side.

Date: 13thc.

Site 2., from the settlement.

6. Rim of a pot. Greyish-white, included with small pebbles and sand. Wheeled. With traces of soot on both surfaces. The rim is ribbed, slightly everted.

17cm Date: 13-14thc.

Site 4.

7. Rim of a bottle. Brownish-red, included with small pebbles and sand. Hand thrown.  
The rim is rounded, ribbed with incised parallel lines.

10 cm Date: 13-14thc.

Site 2., from the settlement.

8. Rim piece of a lid. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of small pebbles and sand .  
Wheeled. Decorated with a rib. The rim is simple, with a slight rib on the outer side.

DIAM: 25 cm Date: 15th c.

Site 4.

9. Rim piece of a pot. Brown, inclusion of small pebbles and sand . Wheeled. Traces of soot on both sides. The rim is is everted.

18 cm Date: 13-14thc.

Site 2., from the settlement.

## Table 2

1. Rim of a kettle. Brown, with dark grey core. Wheeled. The rim is squared and thickened.

22 cm Date: 13-14th c.

Site 8., from the settlement

2. Rim of a kettle. Brown, inclusion of small pebbles and sand . With traces of angobe on the outer side, but also with traces of soot on both sides. The rim is slightly everted and thickened.

DIAM: 22 cm Date: 13th c.

Site 8., from the settlement

3. Rim and handle shred of a kettle. Dark grey, inclusion of sand and small pebbles . Hand-thrown. With brownish angobe on the outer side. The rim is strongly everted, thickened. The ear was formed by a round hole.

DIAM: 21 cm Date: 13-14th c.

Site 8, from the settlement

4. Rim of a pot. Greyish-brown, inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Wheeled. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is strongly everted, stressed with a rib under the top edge.

DIAM.: 14 cm Date: 13-15th c.

Site 9.

5. Piece of flint-stone for guns.

Date: 16-17th c.

Site 7.

6. Body shred of a pot. White, inclusion of sand and small pebbles . hand-thrown. The other side is decorated with parallel incised lines.

Date: 13th c.

Site 9.

7. Rim of a pot. White, inclusion with sand and pebbles. Wheeled. The rim is strongly everted and structured.

Date: 13-14th c.

### Site 7

8. Rim of a jar or a pot(?). White, very smooth, inclusion of sand. Wheeled. On both sides grass green glazed. The rim is slightly everted, decorated with slight ribs on the outer side.

DIAM: 10 cm(?) Date: 14th c.

### Site 9

9. Base part of a jug(?). Light grey, smoothly formed, inclusion of sand. Wheeled. The outer side is decorated with reddish-brownish painted lines.

DIAM.: 12 cm Date: 15-16th c.

### Site 9

10. Rim and handle of a kettle. Brown, with grey core. Strong inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Hand thrown. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is inturned, thickened and cut on the outer part. The handle was formed of a round hole.

DIAM.: 21 cm Date: 12-13th c.

### Site 9

## Table 3

1. Rim of a pot. Brown, with dark grey core. Inclusion of sand. Wheeled. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is strongly everted, with a sharp rib under the top.

DIAM: 22 cm Date: 16-17th c.

Site 8, selected object.

2. Rim of a pot. Grey, inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Wheeled. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is slightly everted, but its top is inturned.

DIAM.: 10 cm Date: 15th c.

Site 8, from the settlement.

3. Rim and body shred of a pot. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Wheeled. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is strongly everted, with a sharply rising inturned rib under the top edge.

DIAM.: 16 cm Date: 16-17th c.

Site 8, selected object.

4. Rim of a pot. Grey, inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Wheeled. The rim is slightly inturned, and stressed with a rising rib on the outer side.

16 cm Date: 15th c.

Site 8, from the settlement.

5. Rim of a pot. Grey, inclusion of sand and pebbles. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is strongly everted, hammerheaded.

DIAM.: 23 cm Date: 14-15th c.

Site 8, from the selected object.

6. Rim piece of a pot. Grey, inclusion of sand and pebbles. With traces of soot on both sides. The rim is strongly everted, hammerheaded.

DIAM.: 23 cm Date: 14-15th c.

Site 8, from the selected object.

7. Rim of a bottle (?). White, inclusion of sand and small pebbles . Wheeled. The rim is high, slightly inturned.

DIAM: 20 cm Date: 14-15th c.

Site 8, selected object.

8. Rim of a lid. Brownish-grey, inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Wheeled. The rim is simple, with a sharp rib inside.

DIAM: 14cm Date: 14-15th c.

Site 8, from the selected object.

9. Rim of a lid. Brown, inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Wheeled. The rim is simple, with a sharp rib in the inner side.

DIAM: 20 cm Date: 14-15th c.

Site 8, from the selected object.

10. Body or shoulder shred of a pot (jug?). Red, smoothly clayed, inclusion of sand is added. The outer side is decorated with combing.

Date: 16-17th c.

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1. Shred of a half column. Red limestone. Its diameter was oval, and the surface is polished.

2. Iron axe. Its edge is half-moon shaped, it is worn from usage.

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1. Rim shred of a kettle. Red, with grey core, Inclusion of sand and small pebbles. Hand-thrown. Both sides with traces of soot. The rim is slightly everted.

DIAM: 23 cm Date: 12-13th c.

2. Body shred of a pot. Grey, inclusion of sand and small pebbles are added. With incised decorative lines on the outer side.

Date: 13-14th c.

Site 8

3. Base shred of a glass vessel.

DIAM: 8 cm Date: 15-16th c.(?)

Site 8



4. Handle fragment of a stoneware vessel of Lostice. Brown.

Site 8

5. Body shred of a pot. White, inclusion of sand and pebbles. Its outer side is decorated with slight ribs.

Date: 15th c.

6. Mouth shred of a jar. Red, with grey core, inclusion of sand and pebbles. Wheeled. The rim is simple.

Date: 15thc.

7. Fragment of a stovetile. Brown, inclusion with sand and small pebbles, well formed. It is decorated with a rib, with round fingerprints.

Date 15-16thc. around

Site 8

8. Rim of a pot from Austria. Dark grey, inclusion of graphite. The rim is everted, slightly hooked, with a masterpiece on its top, bellow the rim it is decorated with slight ribs.

DIAM: 22 cm

Site 8

9. Upper shred of the upper part of a stove-tile (hagyma alakú kályhaszem) Red, with grey core. Well formed, inclusion of sand, Wheeled. With traces of soot in the inner part. On the outer part it is covered with angobe.

Date: 13-14thc.

Site 8

10. Body shred of a stovetile. Red, with grey core. Inclusion of sand, Well formed. Wheeled. The outer part is decorated with dense rows of ribs.

Date: 13-14thc.

Site 8

**Table 6**

1. Rim shred of a kettle. Grey. Inclusion of sand and pebbles. The rim is strongly thickened in both directions . With two round holes.

DIAM: 26 cm Date: 13th c.

Site 8

2. Rim of a pot. Red, inclusion of sand and pebbles. Hand-thrown. The rim is simple, everted.

DIAM: 12 cm Date: 13-14th c.

Site 8

3. Rim of a pot. White, Inclusion of sand and pebbles. The rim is simple, thickened. On the other side fingerprint decorations.

DIAM: 14 cm Date? 14<sup>th</sup> c.

Site 8

4. Rim and handle of a kettle. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and pebbles. Hand-thrown. the rim is slightly inturned, the inner part was thickened. Wit two round handle-holes.

DIAM: 22 cm date: 13th c.

5. Rim of a pot. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and pebbles. Hand-thrown. The rim is simple, everted.

DIAM: 16 cm date: 14th c.

Site 8

6. Rim of a pot. White, inclusion of sand and pebble. Hand-thrown. The rim is simple, everted.

DIAM: 18 cm Date: 13-14th c.

Site 8

7. Body shred of a pot. White, inclusions of sand and pebbles. With decorative incised lines on the outer surface.

Date: 13thc.

### Table 7

1. Fragment of a stove-tile. Red, inclusion of sand.

Date: 15thc.

Site 8

2. Fragment of a stovetile. Red, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and pebbles. In the inner part, there is green glaze. 3

Date: 15thc.

Site 8.

3. Fragment of a stovetile. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and pebbles.

Date: 15-16thc.

Site 8

4. Fragment of a stove tile. Brown, with grey core.

Date: 15thc.

Site 8

5. Rim of a pot. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and pebbles. The rim is simple, stressed with a slight rib below the edge.

DIAM: 21 cm date: 16-17th c.

Site 8

6. Rim of a pot. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion of sand and pebble. The Rim is everted, and stressed with a rib below it.

DIAM: 13 cm Date: 16-17thc.

Site 8

7. Rim of a pot. Grey, inclusion of sand and pebbles. Wheeled. The rim is simple, slightly inturned.

DIAM: 12cm Date: 14-15<sup>th</sup> c.

Site 8

8. Rim of a pot. Brown, inclusion of sand and pebble. Wheeled. The rim is simple, everted and stressed with a rib.

DIAM: 12cm Date: 16-17<sup>th</sup> c.

Site 8

9. Body and handle sherd of a jug. Red, with grey core. Inclusion of sand. Wheeled.

The diameter of the handle is simple, oval and decorated with an incised line.

Date: 16-17<sup>th</sup> c.

Site 8

10. Rim of a pot. Brown, with grey core. Inclusion with sand. Wheeled. The rim is everted, and stressed with a rib.

DIAM: 16cm Date: 16-17<sup>th</sup> c.

Site 8

## Introduction

This thesis aims to complete the complex medieval topography of a specially chosen micro- region, namely *Monostor* estate, in the central part of the Danube Tisza Interfluve region, in the western part of the large geographical unit, namely the Kiskunság Loess Plain. The territory appears as an administrative unit from its earliest depictions on maps, and it can be supposed that this estate can be more or less identical with the *possessio Monostor* mentioned by medieval, Early Modern and Modern sources. (Fig. 3-8) Therefore, a well definable area of administrative borders was chosen, what can be taken at the same time as a geographical micro-region.

This area has not been favored topic for investigations of the settlement structure of medieval Hungary. Although problems of topography have been studied in Hungarian scholarship for over one hundred years,<sup>1</sup> modern, interdisciplinary topographical assessment of this territory has never been made. Regional studies have been published about this part of the country, but mainly focusing on historical questions.<sup>2</sup> Archaeological research was carried out by Kálmán Szabó in the 1930s,<sup>3</sup> but thereafter hardly any investigations of this kind can be mentioned, except for rescue excavations.<sup>4</sup> Even the large scale archaeological-topographical project, the Archaeological Topography of Hungary (*Magyarország Régészeti Topográfiaja*) did not reach the region, until now only the systematic topography of only one area was completed, namely the medieval topography of Asotthalom.<sup>5</sup> Therefore the thesis

<sup>1</sup> Dezs Csánszky, *Magyarország történeti földrajza a Hunyadiak korában* (Historical Topography of Hungary in the Age of the Hunyadis), Vols. 1-4 (Budapest: Franklin, 1890-1913.), György Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza* (Historical Geography of Hungary in the Arpadian Age), Vols.1-4. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1963-1998.)

<sup>2</sup> István Gyárfás, *A jász-kunok története* (History of Iasians and Cumans), Vols. 1-4. (Budapest: privately printed, 1870-1885.), János Hornyik, *Kecskemét város története, oklevéltárral* (History of the Town Kecskemét, with a Charter Register) Vols. 1-4. (Kecskemét: privately published, 1863-1865.)

<sup>3</sup> Kálmán Szabó, *Az alföldi magyar nép m vel déstörténeti emlékei* (Cultural Heritage of the Hungarian Great Plain) (Budapest: Országos Történeti Múzeum, 1938) László Papp, "Ásatások a XVI.században elpusztult Kecskemét környéki falvalban" (Excavations in Villages Near Kecskemét that Were Depopulated in the 16th century) *Néprajzi Értesít* 23(1931): 131-152.

<sup>4</sup> Elvira H. Tóth, "Négy évtized régészeti kutatásai BácsKiskun megyében" (Four Decades of Archaeological Research in Bács-Kiskun County), *Cumania* 12(1990): 81-237.

<sup>5</sup> Marianna Bálint, "Az Árpád-kori településhálózat rekonstrukciója a Duna-Tisza köz déli részén" (Reconstruction of Medieval Topography in the Southern Part of the Danube Tisza Interfluve) *Tanulmányok Csongrád MegyeMúltjából* (1998): 39-50.

basically aims to carry out the modern, interdisciplinary topography of a territory that has never been investigated by modern analytical methods. The micro-region was selected based upon two criteria. Twofold importance for topographic questions: the detailed focus of the work is aimed at discussing the scholarly debate around the kindred monastery of *Péter-* and *Pálmonostora*. It was an important task for the study to solve the problem of whether there were two monasteries in close proximity, or, to prove, whether only one monastery existed there, which might have been devoted to both St. Peter and Paul. The latter solution seemed to be more likely. The location of the monastery (or monasteries) has not been clarified until now, therefore, another task was identifying the place of the monastery. The general focus of the study is to map all the settlements that have ever existed in the area that have ever existed, but are never mentioned by contemporary written sources. Archaeology provides us with evidences for their existence from excavations and fieldwalking.<sup>6</sup>

The thesis could not undertake to complete the detailed history of the region based on contemporary sources, although it was relevant to collect and summarize the main features of settlement structure in the area. A complex topography covers all historical periods in time, but this study will concentrate only on medieval period, from the time of the Hungarian conquest till the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, this area was chosen as a sample area for a basic study, to demonstrate how a topographical research can yield results. At the same time, the micro-region will be used to exemplify how methods work, in what forms and to what extent they can be used. It is important to stress that this research was carried out so as to form the backgrounds of a larger project, hopefully a Ph.D. dissertation, aiming to complete the historical topography of the larger geographical unit, where the selected micro-region belongs to, namely the Kiskunság Loess Plain. This investigation tried to collect and apply all the available methods on the chosen micro-region. Basically three types of information were used: data from contemporary historical sources, analysis of maps, and archaeological information. For lack of written documents, special stress was put on archaeological methods, such as fieldwork and interpreting aerial photos.

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<sup>6</sup> See Szabó, *Az alföldi magyar nép* 21-22 and 130-131.

<sup>7</sup> From settlement historical point of view this period (the turn of the 17th century) brought considerable changes: for example the intensive and quick disappearance of villages during the 15-years war, or the beginning of the formation of the Early Modern farmstead-system.

In conclusion, this thesis tries to test how those modern, in their sense interdisciplinary aimed methods can be applied in a specially chosen micro-region, that has never been investigated, and how, in what extent they can be used. The research tries to outline the medieval settlement history and transformations in the settlement structure of the chosen area. Settlements cannot exist without connections, therefore the analysis of inner road structure of *Monostor*, moreover its possible links to internal and international network will be involved in the study. The other important task is to clarify the debates about the existence and location of *Pétermonostora* and *Pálmonostora*. Features of the landscape, such as geomorphology, hydrology, flora and fauna will be examined, from a historical perspective.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis aims to be an interdisciplinary micro-regional study. Since no topographical research of this type was carried out in the region before, it is important to outline the main features of the research methods.

Topography is usually defined by modern scholarship as not only the register of once existing settlements, but connected to historical description, and also refers to interactions between settlements, settlement structure and landscape. Medieval topography or any kind of reconstruction of topographical processes is one of the most interesting but at the same time the most difficult tasks for a scholar. It is even difficult in the case if the chosen territory did not change a great deal through the centuries. The case of the area between the Danube and Tisza rivers is more problematic, because the territory transformed considerably from the medieval period until the present.

Topographical survey has a long tradition in several fields of research, not only in Europe but in Hungary as well. Therefore, it was useful and necessary to examine previous investigations in topography not only to clarify possible ways and means for this study, but also to discover special solutions taking the local conditions of the research area into consideration.<sup>8</sup>

Topographical publications appear from the 17-18th centuries in Hungary,<sup>9</sup> however, works of a higher scholarly level were published only from about the turn of

<sup>8</sup> There were also attempts to summarize the applied methods in archaeological research. See: János Banner, Gyula László, István Méri, and Aladár Radnóti. *Régészeti Kézikönyv 1. Gyakorlati régészet*. (Budapest:?, 1954)., Dénes Jankovich, "Archaeological topography, theoretical and practical lessons". *Mitteilungen des Institut* 14(1985): 283-292.,\_\_\_\_\_. *A felszíni leletgyűjtés módszerei és szerepe a régészeti kutatásban* (The Methods and Role of Fieldwalking in Archaeological Research). *Régészeti Továbbképz. Fiizetek* 4. (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum- Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Régészeti Intézete, 1993), Gábor Ilon, ed., *A régésztechnikus kézikönyve* (Handbook for Assistants of Archaeologists). Vol.1. (Panniculus Ser.B.No.3. Szombathely: Panniculus Régiségtani Egylet, 1998.) European scholarly literature was collected by Dénes Jankovich. (Jankovich, *A felszíni*) I also used the book of Michael Aston. (Aston, Michael. *Interpreting the Landscape: Landscape Archaeology in Local studies*. London-New York: Routledge, 1997 and Mark Bowden, *Unravelling the Landscape: An Inquisitive Approach to Archaeology* (London: Tempus, 1999.)

<sup>9</sup> Matthias Bel, *Compendium Hungariae geographicum ad exemplar notitiae Hungariae novae historico-geographicae*. Vols. 1-4. Posonii (Bratislava):n.p., 1753., Károly Gottlieb Windisch., *Politische, geographische und historische Beschreibung des Königreich Ungarn*. Pressburg: n.p., 1772., Johann Matthias Korabinszky, *Geographisch-Historisches und Produktion Lexikon von Ungarn*. Posonii (Bratislava): n.p., 1786., András Vályi K, *Magyar országnak leírása* (Description of Hungary). Vols. 1-3.Buda:n.p., 1796-1799.



the 20th century onwards. Traditionally, large-scale historically orientated topographical books were written on the territorial grounds of political, administrative<sup>10</sup> or ecclesiastical units<sup>11</sup>; or authors chose a piece of the built environment for their investigations.<sup>12</sup> Their approach was usually to collect all information from the Early Stone Age till the birth of the study<sup>13</sup>, in other cases they chose a special period for the investigation.<sup>14</sup> It is interesting that while historians dealt with territories of traditional administrative borders, geographers and ethnographers studied geographical regions stressing the importance of interactions between natural endowments and human activity.<sup>15</sup>

The situation for topographical research became more complicated after the Trianon Treaty of 1920, where the greater part of the country was dismantled.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, after the World War II a totally new administrative structure was formed.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, from the second half of the century from the topographical point of view complete "chaos" appeared in publications; some authors used the historical administrative borders in the study, while others applied the modern county system in

<sup>10</sup> Károly Galgóczy, *Pest-Pilis-Solt Vdrmegye Monogrdfidja* (Monograph of Pest-Pilis-Solt County). Vols.1-3. Budapest: n.p., 1877., or Palugyai, Imre. *A Jdszkun Kerületek és Kills Szolnok Vdrmegye Leirdsa* (Description of Jazig Territory and Outer Szolnok County) (Pest: privately printed, 1854.) See also the series of *Description of the Counties and Towns of Hungary*. For the territory between the Danube and Tisza: Borovszky, Samu, ed. *Pest-Pilis-Solt vdrmegye* (Pest-Pilis-Solt County). Vols.1-2.(Budapest:n.p., 1896), or for other regions of the country for example János,Karácsonyi, *Békes Vdrmegye Története* (The History of Békes County). Vols. 1-2. (Gyula:n.p., 1896.), József Holub, *Zala Megye a Középkorban* (Zala County in the Middle Ages). Vols. 1-2. Pécs:n.p., 1929. but also the volumes of Dezs Csanki belong to this group (Csanki, *Magyarorszdg történelmi földrajza*

<sup>11</sup> Jakab Rupp., *Magyarorszdg helyrajzi története f tekintettel az egyházi intézményekre, vagyis nevezetesebb vdrosok, helységek, s az azokban létezett egyhdzi intézmények, püspökvármegyék szerint* (Topographical History of Hungary with Special Attention to the Ecclesiastical Institutions: Description of remarkable Towns and Other Settlements with Their Ecclesiastical Institutions, in Order of the Dioceses). (Pest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történeti Bizottsága, 1854.), Ferenc Chobot., *A vdcí egyhdzmege történeti névtára* (Historical Name Register of the Vacian Diocese) (Vác:?, 1915.), Gyula Szarka, *A vdcí egyhdzmege történeti földrajza a török hódítás korában* (History of the Vacian Diocese in the Age of the Ottoman Occupation) (Vác:n.p., 1940.)

<sup>12</sup> For example monasteries, castles or other fortifications, **road-structure**.

<sup>13</sup> See Borovszky, 1896. Some parts were written by excellent experts of the period, and still used today as reference.

<sup>14</sup> See Csanki, *Magyarorszdg történeti földrajza*

<sup>15</sup> Special research fields such as human geography, settlement geography and settlement ethnography were established. The works of Géza Czirbusz, Jen Cholnoky, Lajos Glaser, Zsigmond Bátky, or István Györffy can be mentioned.

<sup>16</sup> In spite of this in the period between 1920 and 1945 significant topographical projects were carried out. Here the activity of János Banner, Lajos Zoltai, Márta Széll or Kálmán Szabó can be mentioned.

<sup>17</sup> A new county system was made. This meant that some of the historical counties disappeared or more counties were connected. For example from the historical Szabolcs county and Szatmár county

research.<sup>18</sup> From the same period, scholars of topography began to discover and stress the importance and connection between the settlements and the area around them, including re-discovery of the earlier work by geographers and ethnographers. They tried to study the non- natural features in landscape and natural endowments as a unit from a historical perspective, which opened new directions for research.

Modern topographical publications- most of them are made by archaeologists<sup>19</sup>- try to find the connecting points or links to other fields of research so as to open the way for interdisciplinary studies.<sup>20</sup> The first attempt was made in the 1950s by Júlia Kovalovszki, who completed the topography of the region around the town Szentes,<sup>21</sup> applying complex work method, providing a starting point for further investigations. In the last decades there have been many attempts in different parts of the Carpathian Basin and in neighboring territories to sketch the topography of regions partly chosen on a geographical basis.<sup>22</sup> In a summary, we can conclude some general features of earlier research:

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Szabolcs-Szatmár County was established. In more cases even the borders of the counties changed considerably.

<sup>18</sup> György Györffy, *Az Arpadkori Magyarorszdg történeti földrajza* (Historical Topography of Hungary in the Arpadian Age). Vol. 4. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1998., but Piroska Biczó, "Adatok Bács Kiskun Megye középkori építészetéhez" (Data on the Medieval Architecture in County). *Múzeumi Kutatdsok Bács-Kiskun Megyében* (1986): 71-80., Edit Tari, *Középkori templomos helyek Pest megyében*. Studia Comitatus, (Szentendre: Pest Megyei Múzeumok, 2000.)

<sup>19</sup> But historians also have many new results in that field, see: Györffy, 1998, László Blazovich., ed. A *Körös-Maros-Tisza köz települései a középkorban*. (Medieval Settlements in the Körös-Maros-Tisza Region). Dél-alföldi Évszázadok 9. ( Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 1996.) or Pál Engel, "A Drávántúl középkori topográfiája" (Medieval Topography of the Region Around the River Dráva). *Történelmi Szemle* 39 (1997): 297-313.

<sup>20</sup> At the same time we have to add that there were some attempt much more earlier to do historical-topographical research of a geographical region : for example Flóris Rómer, *A Bakony. Természetráji és Régészeti Vázlat* (The Bakony Mountains: Description of Natural History and Archaeology). (Gy r: privately printed, 1860.), Balázs Orbán, *A szekelyfold leírása történelmi, régészeti, természetrajzi és népismereti szempontból* (Description of the Székelyfold from Historical, Archaeological, Natural Historical and Ethnographical Point of View). Vols. 1-6. (Pest: privately printed, 1868-1873.), or Balint Kuzsinszky, *A Balaton környékének archaeologidja* (Archaeology in the territory around Balaton) ( Budapest: n.p., 1920.)

<sup>21</sup> Júlia Kovalovszki, *Régészeti adatok Szentes környékének település történetéhez* (Archaeological Informations about the Topography of the Territory surrounding the Town Szentes) (Régészeti Füzetek 5. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1957.)

<sup>22</sup> Works that concentrate not only on the medieval period: Róbert Müller, *Régészeti terepbejárások a göcseji "szegek" vidékén és településtörténeti tanulságaik* (Archaeological Field Walking in the Region of Göcsej, and Their Topographical Consequences). (Zalaegerszeg: Göcsej Múzeum, 1971.), Ilona Valter "A Bodrogek köz településtörténete" (Topography of the Bodrogek Region). *Agrártörténeti Szemle* 16(1974): 1-18., László Szekeres, *Amit az id eltemetett. Kis vajdasági régészet* (What Time Had Destroyed: Archaeology in Vojvodina). (Novi Sad: Forum, 1981)., Söfalvi, András. *Sövidek régészeti topográfiája* (Archaeological Topography of Sövidek). University Dissertation, Budapest: Budapest University, 2000., Miklos Béla Szke and Laszlo Vador, " Kiserlet egy taji egyseg

1. The investigation always begins with *choosing the region for the survey*. There might be several reasons for choosing an area for research,<sup>23</sup> but in general the territory must be clearly definable either by administrative or geographical criteria. Modern studies prefer to choose a geographical unit, because similar conditions in the natural endowment make it more probable to find and analyze the connections between landscape and the human environment.

2. The second very important step is to *describe the main aim of the study and to define the period, which the investigation would like to cover*. There are two choices: the scholar may complete the topography of the region from the earliest remains of human settlements till the late Middle Ages, or chooses a special period for detailed survey. The main aim of these projects is usually not only to present a detailed site register of the region, but to analyze the transformations in the settlement structure through the defined period of time, moreover, to point out those generalities and specialties that were observed through the study.

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településtörténeti rekonstrukciójára (A Kis-Balaton programot kísér régészeti leletmentés ásatások (1980-1985) tapasztalatai)" (Attempt to Reconstruct the Settlement Structure of a Geographical Region: Results from the Rescue Excavations During the Small Balaton Project, 1980-1985) *Zalai Gyűjtemény* 26(1987): 83-100. Moreover the series of the *Archaeological Topography of Hungary* can be connected to this kind of work.

Works that were specialized on the medieval period: Júlia Kovalovszki, "Orosháza és környéke a magyar középkorban" (The Town Orosháza in the Middle Ages). In *Orosháza története és néprajza*, ed. Nagy, Gyula, Vol.1., 175-195. (Orosháza:n.p.), 1965., Robert Müller "A fonyódi járás középkori településhálózata" (Medieval Settlement Structure around Fonyód). *Somogy Megye Múltjából* 6 (1975): 35-60., Csaba Csorba, "A Sárviz mente településtörténete a X-XVII. Században" (Settlement History of the Sárvizmente Region in the 10-17\* centuries). *Tanulmányok Tolna Megye Múltjából* 3(1972): 61-87., Károly Mesterházy, "Régészeti adatok Hajdú-Bihar megye területére IX-XIII. Századi településtörténetéhez 1." *Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve* (1974): 95-174., \_\_\_\_\_. "Régészeti adatok Hajdú-Bihar megye területére IX-XIII. Századi településtörténetéhez 2." *Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve* (1975): 211-224., László Szekeres, *Középkori települések északkelet-Bácskában* (Medieval Settlements in North-East Bácska) (Novi Sad: ?, 1983.), Piroška Biczó, "A keceli határ emlékei" (Cultural Heritage of the boundaries around Kecel). In *Kecel története és néprajza*, ed. Báth, János, 19-59. (Kecel: n.p., 1984.), Maria Wolf, *Árpád-kori eredetű települések Abauj vármegye déli részén* (Settlements of Arpadian Age Origin in the Southern Part of Abauj County) (Borsodi Közművelődési Központ, 1991.), Elek Benk, *A középkori Keresztúr szék régészeti topográfiája* (Archaeological Topography of Keresztúr szék) (Budapest: ?, 1992.), Edit Tari, *Árpád-kori falusi templomok Cegléd környékén* (Village Churches Around the the Town of Cegléd from the Arpadian Age) (Cegléd: Kossuth Múzeum, 1995.), \_\_\_\_\_. *Templomok Pest megyében*. Studia Comitatus (Szentendrei: Pest Megyei Múzeumok, 2000.), Zsolt Gallina, and Imre Romsics. *A kalocsai Sárköz régészeti emlékei* (Archaeological heritage of the Kalocsa-Sárköz). Kalocsai Múzeumi Közlemények 3. (Kalocsa: Kalocsai Viskó Károly Múzeum, 1996.), Berislav Schejbal, *Medieval Topography of the Daruvar Area*. M.A. Thesis in Medieval Studies at the Central European University. Budapest: Central European University, 1999.

<sup>23</sup> From very personal reasons till rescue procedures (See Székely-Vándor, *Kisérlet*), but the most probable reason for study is to discover the topography of a certain territory, where no former study of

3. The investigation usually consists of "background studies" and "practical/" parts. Background studies means the collection of available data about the region (primary sources, results of former research, maps), and usually made before the practical fieldwork (archaeological excavations or field walking), but as a process the two parts influence or balance each other. At this stage scholars usually clarify some basic *vocabulary* and terms that will be used in the investigation. The meaning of the term *archaeological site* usually refer to any places where archaeological material can be found, but from another approach it can mean 1. Site of the archaeological work; the place of the excavation, 2. Place where the presence of once human existence is located, but because of certain circumstances (such as any destroys, agricultural cultivation) it cannot be seen on the surface.<sup>24</sup> Distinction among the sites<sup>25</sup> is mostly made on the basis of *quantity and quality of discovered archaeological material*. It means that the distribution, density and any other differences in the finds can help to identify various types built environment.<sup>26</sup>

4. The last serious debate is about the evaluation of the collected material and forming conclusions- the *interpretation of collected material*. As most of the data may come from field-walking, it is important to consider what can and what cannot be concluded from the material of such surveys: 1. It cannot be precluded that not all of the once existing settlement sites were discovered. 2. The "lifetime" of the site (the actual period when it was inhabited) cannot be stated for sure. 3. The interpretation of located sites as "settlement" or "monastery" can be doubtful in many cases.

The territory that was chosen for the research of the thesis shows a very complicated picture from administrative point of view. Therefore, it was evident that

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this kind was carried out before, or to modernize former research (See Müller, *Régészeti terepbejárások*)

<sup>24</sup> This criteria is usually used by English scholarship. (See Jankovich, *A felszíneleletgyjtés* 10)

<sup>25</sup> The first thing is logically to consider the period from what the material comes from.

<sup>26</sup> For example on this basis Hungarian scholars identified different types of medieval rural settlements: 1. Villages (extension cca. 100-200x 800-900m), 2. *laza szerkezetu falu* ( 50-100x200-300m), 3. Farmsteads (20-70x 20-70m, concentrated material) See: József Laszlovszky, "Tanyaszer **települések** az Árpád-korban "(Farmsteads in the Arpadian Age) In *Falval, mez város az Alföldön* László Novák and László Selmeczi, eds., 245-256 (Nagykörös; Arany János Múzeum, 1989) , Marianna Bálint, "Az Árpád-kori településhálózat rekonstrukciója a Duna-Tisza köz déli részén" (Reconstruction of the

other criteria should be used when defining the borders of the research area. The geographical term Kiskunság Loess-Ridge partly covers the sand-filled territory between the Danube and Tisza, which had already been known in the Middle Ages as *Sabulum*, from its Cuman inhabitants *Cumania* and later from the Early Modern Period *Cumania Minor* or *Kiskunság*. As it was mentioned before, this area had not been investigated from this point of view before, so the task for the study must be the completion of the medieval topography of the region.<sup>27</sup>

In this case background work began with the collection and re-evaluation of available sources.<sup>28</sup> After this process it became clear which territory should be investigated and what are the questions that will be raised. I found Monostor to be the most interesting subject for a case study, which can be involved in a one-year long research project. This territory is situated in the western part of the previously mentioned geographical unit. There are only scarce and incomplete written material about it (which will be described in Chapter 3), what determined the main directions of the

research. Therefore, some of the basic questions of the study were formed:

1. Where was the kindred monastery located and what can I discover about it in spite the lack of data?
2. If there were medieval villages in the neighboring territory: is it possible to locate Szabó's excavation places? How many medieval village sites are there; what was their age; and connection to the monastery?
3. How did natural endowment and other processes influence settlement structure?
4. Are there any non-natural features in the landscape (for example traces of fishing ponds)?
5. What can I discover about the road structure? Are there any connections between late medieval or 16th century road structure and the situation shown on the ordinance surveys in the 18-19th century?

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Settlement Structure of the Arpadian Period in the Southern Part of the Great Plain) *Tanulmányok Csongrád Megye Műjából* 1998: 39-50.

<sup>27</sup> As the thesis is made for the Master's degree in Medieval Studies, cannot cover all historical periods of time.

<sup>28</sup> Sources and historical circumstances are described in other chapters in details.

Forming these questions led me to another methodological problem: how (by what means) to study a territory that has never been investigated<sup>29</sup> and without detailed written sources? In other words: how to make the most of "alternative", or non-written sources *before* the fieldwork so as not to lose any information that might help to take the advantages of fieldwork?

For this purpose it was not enough only to collect the written and non-written data-historical and modern maps, aerial photos that can be useful in such cases- it was another problem how to locate possible medieval settlement sites in the present landscape? This question is not easy to answer, first of all I had to take the changes of the landscape in the last centuries into consideration. The control of the Danube and Tisza rivers in the 19th century had the most remarkable effect on natural endowments, as the whole hydrological system of the area changed, this brought the transformation of flora and fauna so as the changes in the utilization of the landscape. Therefore, the first task was to make an attempt to reconstruct or at least to sketch the main features of the "original" or "historical" hydrology of the territory, otherwise it is not possible to outline the circumstances that should be considered when locating possible sites. The natural endowments of the region will be discussed in another chapter, here I only mention the method of the investigation. The original water-flows and lakes were selected and put on a map, combined from data of the First Ordinance Survey from the eighteenth century until nowadays. (See Fig. 9) As similar investigations observed that human settlements from the earliest times are usually located near the ridges or banks of lakes or rivers, it was logical to study those places in details.

As a whole I tried to carry out a systematic research in the territory, partly by intensive partly by targeted field walking. As a result, several medieval sites were located. All the sites were documented on the spot by written description, photographs and archaeological material of the sites were also collected. During the research special attention was paid not only to the extension of sites and concentration of archaeological finds, but to any special features in the landscape that could be observed (See Fig 23,24,42). The located sites are registered and described in the

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<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately Szabó's material was lost in the World War II, and there are only short comments on his surveys in his book. See Szabó, *Az alföldi magyar nép*

thesis. They are also shown on a 1:10000 map, where the road structure and water covered areas are also shown. Several tables of illustrative material were attached to the text, to exemplify the collected archaeological material. Since great part of the territory is used as meadow today, all available aerial photos were checked about the area.

In conclusion it was the territory that defined the methods of the investigation. The micro-region was an excellent place for a complex study: for lack of written sources combination the results from map-analysis and collected archaeological data of the region was used. The results showed that these methods can be and must be used in the future investigations of the larger region, and yield the main features of medieval settlement history of a territory that is without contemporary written sources.





## SOURCES

For the purpose of this thesis I used various sources. In this chapter I will to give the basic description of different kinds of data that were used during the work. Basically they can be divided into four major groups, namely contemporary written sources, historical maps, and archaeological data.

### *Written sources*

Written sources are fundamental sources for all historically and/or archaeologically orientated studies. Primary among them are first medieval charters. Very few written documents survived about this region due to the wartime period in the first half of the 18th century, when the town of Kecskemét was set on fire, destroying the town and the archive with the majority of earlier documents. Surviving material was studied and published by János Hornyik in the second half of the 19th century.<sup>30</sup> Even these few sources disappeared (probably were destroyed) in the World War II. Other half of the written sources appeared, when from the second half of the 19th century onwards systematic, topography orientated source publications were written by excellent scholars, whose books are still used today as basic handbooks. István Gyárfás, the first investigator of Jazigs and Cumans in medieval Hungary, collected most of the documents mentioning the Cuman or Iasian population, or the territory they lived in.<sup>31</sup> From about the same time Dezső Csanki published charters from the late medieval (14-15th century) period, on a topographical basis. Later, from the 1960s topographical encyclopedias of the Arpadian Age were published by György Györffy.<sup>32</sup> Special attention was paid to sources, especially taxation lists from the Ottoman period (16-17th centuries), because they contain many interesting data about both settlements and population, and even names of disappeared settlements. They are mostly available in edited and translated (Hungarian) version. Gyula Káldy-Nagy a leading Hungarian Turkologist played a crucial role in this

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<sup>30</sup> Hornyik, *Kecskemét város*

<sup>31</sup> Gyárfás, *A jász-kunok*

<sup>32</sup> See the Volumes of AMTF

work, because he published several taxation lists, including those of the studied territory.<sup>33</sup> These rolls were made by Turkish authorities so as to estimate the value of all estates belonging to the empire, therefore they contain important information about the property (such as how many people lived there/ or deserted, what were their occupation, what kind of agricultural products were produced there, and the estimated incomes of the property).

Interesting and important information can be collected from narrative descriptions of the Early Modern- and Modern Period. From the 18th century onwards scholarly educated and committed people published books on the geographical-historical conditions of the settlements and the country. The territory between the Danube and Tisza rivers was described in almost every work of this period. They give detailed analysis of contemporary situations of the natural resources (hydrology, flora and fauna), economical life (industrial and agricultural production). They wrote about the history and present of the towns and villages, often collected popular local legends of the territory, and often mentioned church ruins or places of deserted settlements. The works of Matyas Bel, Janos Korabinszky, Daniel Cornides, Karoly Szepeshazi, Elek Fenyves, or Frigyes Pesthy are still remarkable pieces of historiography.<sup>34</sup>

### Maps

One of the aims of this thesis was to collect all available material about the region. Maps are outstanding sources for investigating the geographical, hydrological circumstances and changes in the region. They can point out some very interesting features in the landscape, moreover settlements and their structure can also be studied from them. I tried to collect all the available maps of the region. In Hungary in general, topographical maps appeared mainly from the 18th century but the first map

<sup>33</sup>Gyula Káldy-Nagy, *A budai szandzsák 1546-1590. évi összeírásai* (Taxation list from the Szandzsák of Buda, 1546-1590) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985.)\_\_\_\_\_. *A budai szandzsák 1559-es összeírásai* (Taxation lists from the Szandzsák of Buda, 1559) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977.)

<sup>34</sup> All publications about the territory between the Danube and Tisza rivers of the 18-19th centuries were collected and available in edited version: Tibor Iványosi-Szabó, ed. *Helytörténeti források és szemelvények a XVIII-XIX. századból* (Sources and Selected Passages of Local History from the 18-19th Centuries) (Bács Kiskun Megye Múltjából 6, Budapest: Bács Kiskun Megyei Levéltár, 1982.)

of the Hungarian Kingdom of 1528<sup>35</sup> already contains important information, because it depicts *Monostor* as a settlement. (Fig.1) On the map of the Kiskunság from 1740 historical geography and hydrology can be studied in details, bigger and smaller settlements, the road structure, administrative borders and in some places also the field system is shown. (Fig.2) In the 18-19th centuries three large-scale ordinance surveys were made of the country. (Figs. 3,4,5) They are more precise and detailed than earlier maps, and often show places of deserted settlements, moreover, in several cases short comments are attached to them. Road structure and geographical-hydrological endowment shown on them can be compared in details with modern maps. Estate maps are available about the territory from the middle of the 19th century. (Figs. 6,7) Their place-name evidences, the marks and description inner boundaries were important sources for the study. Modern maps of 1:25000, 1:10000 helped a lot both before and during the field work. (Figs.8,9)

### *Archaeological Data*

More archaeological research was carried out in the region. In the 1930s Kálmán Szabó located and excavated many important medieval sites, including the church and cemeteries of *Felső-* and *Alsómonostor*, and more villages around them.<sup>36</sup> Although most of the documentation of his excavations and even the main part of the found material were destroyed in World War II, his publication is still used today as a basic literature about medieval sites and material culture of the area. Thereafter hardly any systematic investigations of this kind can be mentioned, smaller, mostly rescue excavations were carried out by Piroska Biczó, Elvira H.Tóth, Mihály Kőhegyi, György V. Székely. The only systematic survey was carried out by András Pálóczi-Horváth in the medieval Cuman village of *Szentkirály*,<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> See *Tabula Hungariae per Lazarum...* In Pál Hrenkő and Árpád Váry-Papp, *Magyarország régi térképeken* (Hungary on Old Maps) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1990.)

<sup>36</sup> Szabó, *Az alföldi magyar nép*, Papp, *Ásatdsok*

<sup>37</sup> András Pálóczi-Horváth, "A Lászlófalván 1969-74. évben végzett régészeti feltárások eredményei" (Results of Excavations in Lászlófalva, 1969-1974) *Cumania* 4(1976): 275-311., \_\_\_\_\_, "Régészeti és településtörténeti adatok a kun letelepedéshez (Egyközépkori kun falu, Szentkirály feltárásának az eredményei)" (Archaeological and Settlement historical data to the settlement of Cumans, the Results from the Excavation at Szentkirály) In *Falvak, mez városok az Alföldön*, László Novák and László Selmeczi, eds. (Az Arany János Múzeum Közleményei 4 (1986): 215-236.). \_\_\_\_\_, "Küls

however, smaller investigation were carried out in the monastery of *Bát*, where the *curia nobilitarius* of the *Töttös* family was identified.<sup>38</sup> Not far from *Monostor*, two more early kindred monasteries were identified and excavated namely monastery of *Szer*,<sup>39</sup> and *Ellésmonostor*.<sup>40</sup> The most detailed list of archaeological studies in the region was collected by Elvira H. Tóth.<sup>41</sup>

Beside the collection of former results it seemed inevitable to find and to create new sources, data. The importance of aerial photography in archaeological surveys has been stressed in scholarly literature many times. There are two series of aerial photos that was used: in the 1950s and 1960s the Hungarian army took several series of aerial photos. Although they were not made for archaeological purposes, in many cases I found very useful and interesting pictures. The other part of the aerial photos I used and checked were taken as a part of the project of targeted and intensive aerial photography of Hungary.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately hardly any pictures could have been connected with the study area: only the church ruin of *Alsómonostor* was identified on a picture from the 1950s, however, many interesting objects were observed in the 1990s in the close neighbourhood as well.

Finally because of the deficiencies of previous research I tried to examine the territory through intensive, in some cases targeted field walking. During this fieldwork each site was documented through written description, photos, and

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kemencés lakóházak a középkori Szentkirályon" (Houses with external stoves in the Medieval Village of Szentkirály) *Arany János Múzeum Közleményei* 6(1989): 113-134.

<sup>38</sup> ÁMTF I., 709-710., Piroska Biczó, " Régészeti kutatások Bátmonostor területén" (Archaeological Investigations in Bátmonostor) ( *Memlékevedelem* 26(1981): 104-108).,....." A középkori Bátmonostor feltárásának eredményei" (Results from the Excavations in Bátmonostor) (*Múzeumi Kutatások Bács-Kiskun Megyében* (1984): 36-39).,..... "A bátmonostori ásatások" (Excavations in Bátmonostor) (In *Középkori régészetünk újabb eredményei és id szer feladatai*, eds. Fodor, István and László Selmeczi, 363-373, Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1985).

<sup>39</sup> For its history see: János Hornyik, *Pusztaszer története* (History of Pusztaszer). Kecskemét: privately printed, 1865., Karácsonyi, János . *A pusztaszeri monostor kegyurai* (Patrons of Szermonostor). Budapest: privately printed, 1897., Ottó Trogmayer and István Zombori. *Szer monostorától Ópusztaszerig* (From the Monastery of Szer till Ópusztaszer). Budapest: Magvet, 1980., ÁMTF I., 904-905. , Romhányi, 2000, 64. Latest summary: Ottó Trogmayer, "Fecerunt magnum aldumas"-Gondolatok Szer monostoránál építéstörténeti 1" (*Fecerunt Magnum Aldumas*": Thoughts about the Medieval Architectural Phases of Szermonostor), 2000. In Kollár, *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer*, 81-107.

<sup>40</sup> See the latest summar the latest summary of research: Éva Pávai, "Ellésmonostor kutatása" (Investigations of Ellésmonostor), In Kollár, *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer*, 219-232.

<sup>41</sup> Elvira H. Tóth, "Négy évtized régészeti kutatásai a Duna-Tisza közén" (Four Decades of Archaeological Research in the Territory between the Danube and Tisza Rivers) *Cumania* 12(1990): 81-237.

collections of archaeological material This documentation was also a remarkable source for the investigation.

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<sup>42</sup> The collection can be found in the archive of the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology at Pécs University.

## THE NATURAL ENVIROMENT OF THE REGION

Monostor estate is situated in the inner, central part of the Danube Tisza Interfluvial Ridge, from geographical point of view, on the borderland of two geographical micro-region: the Bugac Loess Plain and the Kiskunság Sand Plain. This is a flat area of the country, with low sand hills, thin soils of sand and loess, divided by long, deep depressions, filled with impermeable deposits. The height above sea-level decreases from the west towards the east, in the eastern part of the study area this height varies between 120-109m, in the eastern part it is between 110-102m. The geomorphologic conditions of the area<sup>43</sup> developed in the Upper-Pliocene-Pleistocene, when the ancient Danube river flowed through the Ridge, and laid down its alluvial deposits. The river changed its direction in the last glacial-phase, and later the wind was the most important factor that had crucial effect on the region's natural conditions. The wind moved considerable part of the alluvial deposit of the Danube, and formed the north-west to south-east oriented sand hills, with smaller and larger basins among them. These depressions became filled with water, some of them dried during times (Fig10, 17, 30, 44.). Medieval charters mention these hills as "*halom*" ("mound"), "*hegy*" ("mountain"), "*domb*" ("hill"), and these features often played important role as boundary markers.(Fig.42,43)

Among features of nature hydrology had the most crucial impact on settlements and the structure of inhabited places, therefore, has a special role in topographical investigations. Today the Danube Tisza Interfluvial region is one of the driest regions of the country. In previous centuries, especially before the regulation projects of the Danube and Tisza in the nineteenth century, the situation was different. On maps from the Early Modern Period numerous lakes are shown, among them often swampy, marshy places appear. Moreover, small streams, brooks are shown that all run into the Tisza River because of the west-east slope of the region. Medieval sources often relate to similar circumstances: many place-names are mentioned with endings like "*fert*" ("swamp"), "*sdr*" ("marsh"), "*tó*" ("lake"), "*szék*" ("lake or place of a lake with white alkali"). Today we can conclude the extent of water-filled areas

<sup>43</sup> See Márton Pécsi, *A dunai Alföld. Magyarország tájféldsorozata I.* (The Great Plain: Geographical Regions of Hungary I.), Budapest, nineteen67

from the appearance of meadow soils, moreover, on aerial photos the once water-covered territories can be observed as darker stasis.<sup>44</sup> (See Fig. 12)

*Monostor* was once probably divided by several lakes, but unfortunately most of them dried out before now, and other swampy areas are shown on maps as well, the greatest of them was probably the so called "*Kiss Zsombok Rét*" ("Smaller Swampy Meadow") and "*Nagy Zsombok Rét*" (Larger Swampy Meadow"). (Fig.43.) There are two canals on the territory today, namely "*K vágó ér*" and "*Gátér*". As their names suggest, they were both shaped from natural brooks ("*ér*" means brook), in the 1940s.<sup>45</sup>

The geographic structure of the region made the development and spread of different species possible. Various vegetation developed in the region, dense forests, meadows, swamps are mentioned in contemporary descriptions. It is suggested by scholars that unlike the situation today, a considerable part of the Great Plain was covered with forests. Sources proved the existence of extensive forests in the region: in 1211 pinewood, maybe juniper trees are mentioned: "...*meta, qui est pinus... fenues...*"<sup>46</sup>, and in 1224 in the southern part of the region, willow trees were mentioned: "...*silva, que vulgo Fyzufortu dicitur.*" In the perambulation of *Cegléd* in 1368, oak forest is mentioned ("*theulerdeu*"),<sup>47</sup> and we even know that a village called "*Tulg*" or "*Tulgh*" ("oak") existed In the Arpadian Age in the area.<sup>48</sup> Other species, for instance poplar and birch were identified by xylotomical research of archaeological finds.<sup>49</sup> Different floras provided habitats for different species of animals. Early Modern descriptions often refer to the richness of fauna in the region: in the reeds of swampy, or wet areas were inhabited by a great number of fish, crabs, turtles, frogs, birds, wild ducks.<sup>50</sup> Eagles were the largest birds of the meadows. It can be assumed that other animals of the previously described flora, such as deer, foxes, hares lived there.

<sup>44</sup> Bálint, nineteen98 46.

<sup>45</sup> Pécsi, nineteen67 226.

<sup>46</sup> ÁMTF III., 323

<sup>47</sup> ÁMTF I., 897, and Károly Kaán, *Alföldi kérdések* (Questions of the Great Plain), nineteen-20, Budapest, n.p., nineteen39.

<sup>48</sup> This village was situated near *Kőrös*, as sources suggest, and a *via magna* passed it. ÁMTF I., 906.

<sup>49</sup> Pál Greguss, "Szeged környéki leletek xylotómiai vizsgálata" (Xylotomical Study of Archaeological Finds from the Neighbouring area of Szeged) *Botanikai Közlemények* (nineteen93): 133, Bálint, nineteen98 43.

<sup>50</sup> See Iványosi, *Helytörténeti források*

In *Monostor* various types of fauna can be found: the largest part of the territory is covered with drier or swampy meadows, on which extensive reed beds developed, providing a hiding place for a rich fauna. "*Monostori erd*" ("*Monostor* forest") is situated in the central part of the study territory, today it is mainly covered by birch trees and junipers.

Natural conditions of a territory have crucial effect not only on human settlements, but also influence economic life, for example trade connections. In topographical investigations these aspects play special role because they determine the location of human settlements. Up to the nineteenth century no settlements could survive without having water-supply near the settlement. From Prehistory onwards inhabited places were always situated on riverbanks, or ridges near water. In the studied area the presence of lakes, swamps, and other temporary wet areas determined the places that were suitable for habitation, moreover routes among settlements were also fixed, therefore, both were preserved. Even in the Modern Period, during the map-analysis and fieldwork it was observed that modern farmsteads were not built below the elevation of 102-103m.



## OUTLINE OF SETTLEMENT HISTORY IN THE REGION

This thesis aims to describe the complex topography of the selected micro region, but this work cannot be completed without knowing the historical events, processes, and especially transformations that took place in the settlement structure of the territory. Therefore, it was very important for this investigation to sum up the historical, especially settlement historical evidences of the area. This helped to place the chosen sample territory, which has very few written data about its history, into a wider context. The medieval history of the territory between the Danube and the Tisza rivers was studied and discussed in previous historical literature according to various criteria.<sup>51</sup> Scholars chose areas of administrative borders for their investigations (county-borders or ecclesiastical units), or followed other themes (such as immigration or the history of the Cumans) in different periods of time, but unfortunately no comprehensive study was undertaken about the region.

### *The Age of the Hungarian Conquest*

Results of archaeological research demonstrated the existence of the conquering Hungarians in the area from the end of the 9th century. As no reliable written data survived about the inner situations of the 10th century Carpathian Basin, historians suppose that the central part of the area, so as the greater part of the territory between the Danube and Tisza rivers was occupied by the family of Árpád. Archaeological finds from this period appear for almost two centuries, their quality, quantity and distribution outlined more areas that may have been special, probably central places: for example around Kalocsa<sup>52</sup>, Csongrád<sup>53</sup>, or smaller concentration of finds were found around Kiskunfélegyháza<sup>54</sup>, or Kecskemét.<sup>55</sup> Archaeological material

<sup>51</sup> See detailed bibliography in the "Methods" chapter.

<sup>52</sup> Where presumably a ducal residence existed, and later the archiepiscopate of Kalocsa was founded.

<sup>53</sup> Around the today town of Csongrád until now 16 cemeteries were located. The dese invasion of the territory is explained with the closeness of the earthwork fortification of Csongrád. According to its Slavic name, this fortification most probably already existed before the Hungarian conquest, and later this place became the center of Csongrád county.

<sup>54</sup> Fodor, István, ed. *The Ancient Hungarians: Exhibition Catalouge*. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1996. (thereafter abbreviated as *Ancient Hungarians*)

of the region, except for some very special objects, fits without great differences into the general legacy of the conquering Hungarians found elsewhere in the area. In the graves of Izsák-Balázspusztá, Kiskunfélegyháza- Radnóti Street, Kiskunfélegyháza-Határdomb, and Ladánybene-Benepusztá lonely graves of people from the leading circles of the society were buried, what is reflected in their richly decorated harness, dress ornaments, and sabretache plates.<sup>56</sup> More smaller graveyards of families were located there for example in Kecskemét<sup>57</sup> or in Homokmégy-Halom<sup>58</sup> and several cemeteries of commoners were found, for example in Kiskunfélegyháza-Kántordomb,<sup>59</sup> Kecskemét- Úrrét, Kecskemét-Talfája.<sup>60</sup> In 1938 the traces of conquering Hungarians were located also in the southern part of *Monostor* estate, in *Alsómonostor*, where Kálmán Szabó identified the grave of a high-born women.<sup>61</sup> Unfortunately none of the sites was systematically researched, and finds are known exclusively from rescue excavations. In spite of this, finds demonstrate that the territory was populated in that period. Moreover, notable finds show that presumably a kindred or family of high rank lived in the close neighborhood of the later *Monistor* estate.

### *The Arpadian Period*

In the Arpadian Age, the north-central part of the region between the Danube and Tisza rivers belonged to the Bishopric of Vác, while the south-western part to the Archbishopric of Kalocsa.<sup>62</sup> The greater part of the area was divided between four

<sup>55</sup> Elek Kada, "Kecskeméti ásatások" (Excavations in Kecskemét). *Archaeologiai Értesít* (1896): 40-51.

<sup>56</sup> All the finds were published in the catalogue. See: *Ancient Hungarians*

<sup>57</sup> In Kecskemét-Cédulaház. See Kada, *Ásatások*

<sup>58</sup> See Horváth M., Attila. "A homokmégy-halomi temt és a Bács-Kiskun megyei honfoglaláskori lel helyek összefüggései" (The Graveyard of Homokmégy-Halom, and its Connections with other Finds from the Age of the Conquest in Bács-Kiskun County) In Wolf, Mária and László Révész, eds. *A magyar honfoglalás korának régészeti emlékei*, 125-148, Miskolc: Hermann Ottó Múzeum, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> See *Ancient Hungarians*, 330.

<sup>60</sup> See Kada, *Ásatások* 40

<sup>61</sup> Unfortunately the grave was partly destroyed by agricultural work, therefore only parts were found by Szabó. Altogether 91 decorated silver harness pieces and cloth ornaments were collected. See: Szabó, Kálmán, *Ásatási segédeszközök* (Essential Tools in Archaeological Excavations) *Archaeologiai Értesít* (1896): 296-297.

<sup>62</sup> The ecclesiastical topography of the region was lately summarized by László Koszta. Koszta, László, "Dél-Magyarország egyházi topográfiája a középkorban" (Ecclesiastical Topography of South

counties ("vdrmegye"): Pest, Szolnok, Bodrog and Csongrád. The study area belonged to Csongrád county, it was shown by scholars to be covered in the expression "Shung" of 1219.<sup>63</sup> Although occasional written sources are known from the 11th century onwards about the region, it is not possible to draw the settlement structure or name all the landowners of the area. In spite of this, data seem to outline the situation in the Arpadian Age. It seems that the greater part of the territory was royal property, the greatest of them was the town of *Szeged*, the center of salt distribution.<sup>64</sup> Other part of the land was possessed by different ecclesiastical institutions, moreover, they had fishing places and ferries as well.<sup>65</sup> The first donated private property can be linked to the *Becsegergely* and *Dorozsma* kindred, who already appear in a charter of 1075 as landowner, but the *Borkaldn* kindred also had notable possessions there. In the southwestern part of the region, in Bodrog county considerable areas of land were and was owned by the *Botond* -, *Hanta*-, and *Haraszt* kindred. From the end of the 12th century, other private landowners appeared in this county, namely the *Szentemágocs*- and *Jdk* kindred. Little is known about the settlement structure of the region, the greatest settlement in the region was the *civitas* of Szeged, but besides the Episcopal seat of Kalocsa and the castle of Csongrad hardly any settlement of greater importance can be mentioned in the Arpadian Age. Written sources only rarely mention villages of the area, in Bács-Kiskun county only 185 settlements with churches are mentioned for the whole Middle Ages.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, archaeological investigations have crucial importance in the research of settlement structure.<sup>67</sup> In several parts of the region, parts of villages, farmsteads<sup>68</sup> came to light in excavations.<sup>69</sup> From these research the results of Kalman Szabo has to be stressed: he excavated several parts of villages from

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Hungary in the Middle Ages), In Kollár, Tibor, ed., *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer*, 41-81, Dél-Alföldi Évszázadok 13. Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 2000. (Henceforth Kollár, *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer*)

<sup>63</sup> ÁMTF I., 898-899., and Kristó, Gyula. *A vdrmegyék kialakulása Magyarországon* (Formation of the County System in Hungary) (Budapest: Magvet, 1988. (p.441))

<sup>64</sup> See Gyula Kristó, ed. *Szeged története I. A kezdetektől 1686-ig* (History of Szeged, from its Origins till 1686) (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 1983.)

<sup>65</sup> ÁMTF I, 884.: For instance the abbeies of Garamszentbenedek, Tihany, Zalavár and Bakonybél, the bishops of Vác and Eger owned land here.

<sup>66</sup> Piroška Biczó, "Adatok Bács-Kiskun megye középkori építészetéhez" (Data on the Medieval Architecture in Bács-Kiskun county" *Múzeumi Kutatások Bács-Kiskun Megyében* (1986): 71-80.

<sup>67</sup> Names of settlements that are mentioned by charters, were collected by György Györffy, see ÁMTF

<sup>68</sup> József Laszlovszky, "Tanyaszer települések az Árpád-korban" (Farmsteads in the Arpadian Age) *Arany János Múzeum Közleményei* (1989): 131-151.

<sup>69</sup> The most detailed collection of them in Bács-Kiskun county: H.Tóth, *Négy évtized*

the Arpadian Age in the 1930s.<sup>70</sup> He also excavated parts of settlements in *Alsomonostor* "around the church ruin", where he found traces of houses, accompanied by abundant archaeological material.<sup>71</sup> Systematic topography only around the modern village of Ásotthalom was carried out, where more types of settlements were observed and located, namely villages, dispersed settlements and farmsteads.<sup>72</sup> These studies established that in the Arpadian period probably the same dense settlement structure existed here, as in other parts of the country. Ecclesiastical foundations, namely monasteries were also situated in the area.<sup>73</sup> The earliest of them is the monastery of *Szer*, which was founded at about the turn of the 12th century by the *Borkalán* kindred.<sup>74</sup> This kindred founded two other monasteries in the region, namely *Ellésmonostor* a<sup>75</sup> and *Dorozsmamonostora*.<sup>76</sup> Little is known about *Tárnokmonostor*, founded by the *Haraszt* kindred. One of the greatest private landowners of the region, the *Becsegergely* kindred had also more foundations: the monastery of *Bát* (founded by *comes Both* in the 1190s),<sup>77</sup> and monastery or monasteries of *Petermonostora* and *Pálmonostora*, of which history and location constitute the basis of the thesis.

Political, social, and economic transformations of the 13th century that brought considerable changes in the life of the whole country, including this territory,

<sup>70</sup> Szabó, *Az alföldi*

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 21-22.

<sup>72</sup> Bálint, *Az Árpád-kori településhálózat*

<sup>73</sup> They were recently discussed by László Koszta. See Koszta, 2000

<sup>74</sup> For its history see: János Hornyik, *Pusztaszer története* (History of Pusztaszer). Kecskemét: privately printed, 1865., János Karácsonyi, *A pusztaszeri monostor kegyurai* (Patrons of Szermonostor). Budapest: privately printed, 1897., Ottó Trogmayer and István Zombori. *Szer monostortól Ópusztaszerig* (From the Monastery of Szer till Ópusztaszer). Budapest: Magvet, 1980., ÁMTF I., 904-905. , Romhányi, 2000, 64. Latest summary: Ottó Trogmayer, "Fecerunt magnum aldomas"-Gondolatok Szer monostorának építéstörténetéről" (*Fecerunt Magnum Aldumas*": Thoughts about the Medieval Architectural Phases of Szermonostor), 2000. In Kollár, *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer*, 81-107.

<sup>75</sup> See Éva Pávai, "Ellésmonostor kutatása" (Investigations of Ellésmonostor), In Kollár, *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer*, 219-232.

<sup>76</sup> ÁMTF I., 730., Romhányi, *Kolostorok* 66.

<sup>77</sup> ÁMTF I., 709-710., Piroska Biczó, " Régészeti kutatások Bátmonostor területén" (Archaeological Investigations in Bátmonostor) ( *M emlékvédelem* 26(1981): 104-108),....." A középkori Bátmonostor feltárásának eredményei" (Results from the Excavations in Bátmonostor) (*Múzeumi Kutatások Bács-Kiskun Megyében* (1984): 36-39),..... "A bátmonostori ásatások" (Excavations in Bátmonostor) (In *Középkori régészetünk újabb eredményei és id szer feladatai*, eds. Fodor, István and László Selmeczi, 363-373, Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1985).

had been analyzed in scholarship,<sup>78</sup> demonstrating that this period was the first remarkable period of the settlements' desertion.<sup>79</sup> The Mongol Invasion of the country in 1241-1242 was one among the most important factors in this process, this wartime period not only influenced, but quickened the changes. There are different opinions about the degree of destruction caused by Tartars, but probably much of the country was destroyed. According to the data, the most devastated area of the country was the Great Plain, where scholars estimate that more than 40 to 50 percent of the inhabited places might have disappeared.<sup>80</sup> Not only settlements fell prey to the invasion, it is also explained with the Tartar's destruction that greater part of the previously founded smaller, private monasteries also vanished from the sources.

There was one more event that determined Hungary's history in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and it was the immigration and settlement of Cuman and Iasian tribes about the time of the Tartar invasion of Hungary.<sup>81</sup> The territory between the Danube and Tisza rivers was populated by Cuman tribes. Their settlement areas were determined by the law of 1279, which was based on the real situation, therefore, gives a clear picture of their camp areas. This document also tells that Cumans were allowed to settle only on royal property, in deserted areas. The central part of the Danube-Tisza Interfluvium was occupied by the *Chertan* kindred.<sup>82</sup> This clan, whose name means "pike-fish", carved out pieces from all counties of the region. Cumans not only created new settlements for themselves, but often re-populated villages that were

<sup>78</sup> Main tendencies and questiones are summarized in: Gyula Kristó, *Magyarország története 896-1301* (History of Hungary from 896 till 1301) (Budapest: Osiris, 1998), or Jen Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok* (Last Members of the Arpad Dynasty) (Historia Könyvtár, Monográfiák 1. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézet, 1993).

<sup>79</sup> This *Wüstungsperiode*, which was observed and analyzed throughout Europe was also discussed in Hungarian scholarly literature. In Hungary scholars argue that its first larger wave was in the second half of the 13th century. See István Szabó, *A falurendszer kialakulása Magyarországon X-XV. század* (The Development of the Hungarian Village System in the 10-15th Centuries) 177-183 (Budapest: Akadémia, 1971.), \_\_\_\_\_, *A középkori magyar falu* (The Hungarian Village in the Middle Ages) (Budapest: Akadémia, 1969.), Ferenc Maksay, *A magyar falu középkori településrendje* (Settlement Structure of the Medieval Hungarian Village) (Budapest: Akadémia, 1971.)

<sup>80</sup> György Györffy suggests that 75% of settlements in Csongrád county were deserted in that period. (ÁMTF I, 886). But it is debated in scholarship whether the Mongol invasion was as fatal as sources suggest, because the Hungarian kingdom appears as a strong and potential state with expansive politics already in the second half of the 13th century. On the other hand, other, mainly social and economical processes also might have caused the disappearance of settlements. (Szabó, 1971)

<sup>81</sup> For detailed history see: András Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians: Steppe Peoples in Medieval Hungary* (Budapest: Corvina, 1989.)

<sup>82</sup> Pálóczi-Horváth, *Petschenegs* 54-55.

abandoned during the Mongol Invasion (for instance the village of Szentkirály<sup>83</sup>). The previously Magyar-populated village of Halas became the center of their inner administrative body (which was granted by law), moreover, by the mid-fourteenth century this place had become the residence of the clan's head..<sup>84</sup> According to the charter of 1258, *monasterium Petur Monustura* remained private property after the Mongol invasion, sources suggest that in the later centuries as well, it never became the part of the Cuman camp area.<sup>85</sup> In the 14-15<sup>th</sup> centuries Cumans and their settlements were integrated into the Hungarian settlement structure, differences among them can be observed only that Cuman- inhabited areas were taken out from usual administrative structure of the country, as early as 1279. From this independence, units of administration developed, called "seats" ("Hungarian sources mention these units as "*sedes*"), while the rest of the mid-Interfluve remained under the authority of the counties. According to the sources, it is not clear, whether the studied area belonged to the territory of Csongrad or Fejer county, because documents of both 1347 and 1349 mention *possessio Petur Monustura et Palmonustora .... cum suis pertinenciis in comitatu Fejer*. These data can have two meanings: both *possessios* and the property belonging to them were in Fejer county, or *Petur Monustura* was in county *Csongrad*, and only the property attached to them was situated in county *Fejer*, while the *possessio* itself in *Csongrad*. Although only four charters survived from the 14-15<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>86</sup> they contain a great deal important information. Both charters from 1347 and 1349 reveals that the *possessio* was the property of *Töttös* of *Becse*, who was one of the greatest landowners of his age. He became the member of the *Becsegergely* kindred through paying fine instead of a member of the same kindred. He inherited the estate and monastery of *Batmonostor*, where he built his noble residence (*curia*), moreover, he called Augustine Friars to the monastery of *Bát*.<sup>87</sup> At about this time *Peturmonustora* and *Palmonustora* appear as *possessio*, therefore, probably the monastery or monasteries there were not used. The

<sup>83</sup> András Pálóczi-Horváth, "A Lászlófalván 1969-1974-ben végzett régészeti ásatások eredményei" (Results from the Excavations in Lászlófalva, between 1969 and 1974) *Cumania* (1976): 275-303.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 56

<sup>85</sup> It was private property, but never an ecclesiastical one, as György Györffy refers to it. (AMTF I, 888)

<sup>86</sup> Uptil now I could not find more, but the possible existence of unpublished charters about the territory cannot be precluded.

<sup>87</sup> AMTF I, 709-710, Biczó, *A középkori Bátmonostor*

charters contain additional data: the estate is mentioned with the properties linked to it, moreover, the ancient privilege charters donated by king Béla are mentioned.<sup>88</sup> There is one more relevant piece of information, which is the name *Lucasius, filius Nicholai de Peturmonostora*. The attribute "*de Petermonostora*" after medieval names usually refers to the place, the settlement where the person is originated from, or lives. If we apply this rule in the previously mentioned case, it would be an indirect reference to some kind of settlement that existed in the territory, or the place, where this noble man and his family lived.

It seems that the whole settlement structure transformed considerably in the late medieval period, however this process has not been clarified until now. Notable part of the inhabited places became deserted during the 14-15th centuries, while other villages and market towns developed.<sup>89</sup> The *civitas* of Szeged remained the greatest town of the region, but several settlements emerged in the area. The market towns ("*oppidum*") of *Kecskemét*, *Cegléd*, *Körös*, *Félegyháza*, *Szer*, and *Halas* had special role in the region's economic life. They were special central places, having the function of privileged towns, without urban, with smaller or larger market areas.<sup>90</sup> These market towns were not only centers of internal trade, but also took part in international commerce. Cattle trade established their fame and fortune.

Archaeological excavations were carried out in the market town of *Szer*, through which the material culture of a smaller center is exemplified. Several late medieval (15-16th centuries) villages were investigated by Kálmán Szabó,<sup>91</sup> and the late medieval Cuman village of *Szentkirdly* was studied and excavated in details,<sup>92</sup> from which finds of similar quality appeared.<sup>93</sup> moreover, also the *curia nobilitarius* of *Bátmonostor* is known.<sup>94</sup>

Although more types of settlement was identified by scholarship, many aspects of settlement structure are uncertain. For this, *Monostor*, the object of this study, is a

<sup>88</sup> Unfortunately the charter does not say which of the four kings who were named Béla.

<sup>89</sup> This period brought the second wave of desertment. See also footnote Nr 39

<sup>90</sup> The question was detailed and studied by András Kubinyi. (See: András Kubinyi, *Városfejlés és vásárhálózat a középkori Alföldön és az Alföld szílel* (Development of Towns and Market Network in the Medieval Great Plain of Hungary), (Dél alföldi évszázadok 14., Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 2000).)

<sup>91</sup> Szabó, 1938 and Papp, *Ásatások*

<sup>92</sup> See Pálóczi-Horváth, *A Lászlófalván*, Pálóczi-Horváth, *Régiészeti és településtörténeti adatok*

<sup>93</sup> Such as similar types of exported pottery, stove-tiles, headdresses or similar house-types.

<sup>94</sup> See Biczó, *A középkori Bátmonostor*

good example. It is mentioned in 15-16th century sources as *possessio*. This word had different layers of meaning in this time: basically it meant "estate", but it is *certain* from sources that more existing villages, sometimes even smaller market towns were also called *possessio*. For example in 1438: "...*villua seu possessio Seulch...*" (Szölcs, Veszprém county) appears, or the *oppidum* of *Hódvásárhely* is referred to as *possessio*.<sup>95</sup> In previous scholarly literature the existence of settlement or settlements in *possessio Monostor* was not raised, because besides the kindred monastery no settlements are mentioned in documents. Therefore, the late medieval attribute *possessio* linked to *Monostor* made scholars think that in this case this means the estate, but no settlements. This fact can be questioned after the detailed analysis of available data, since Kálmán Szabó's excavation in *Fels monostor* found a church with single apse, which was identified later with the church of the monastery.<sup>96</sup> But the ruin had a 15th century phase, however, which means that even if this church was that of the monastery, it was used long after the monastery's disappearance. In conclusion, even if we do not have direct evidences, the late medieval name *possessio Monostor* or *Petermonustora* may be connected to the church ruin from the 15th century, or to the settlement that it belonged to.

### ***The Ottoman Occupation Period***

The next important period when settlement structure transformed considerably was the age of the Ottoman occupation. The Great Plain was first destroyed by Ottoman troops in 1526, before and after the battle of *Mohács*, and not much later, from 1541 the territory became a part of the Ottoman Empire. In this period the study region fell under the authority of *Buda*. Scholarly literature noted that during the wartime periods of the 16th century, especially in the Fifteenth Years' War, several, probably considerable part of the settlements were destroyed or deserted.<sup>97</sup> Other scholars pointed out that this was not the only cause of villages' disappearance, the picture was more complicated. Besides wars economic and social reasons often forced

<sup>95</sup> Kubinyi, *Development of Towns*

<sup>96</sup> AMTF I., 899, Biczó, *Adatok* 72., Romhányi, *Monasteries* 51.

<sup>97</sup> Szabó, *Az alföldi* 79



people to move to a more secure settlement- mainly to market towns. This did not mean that the territory automatically lay fallow: tax lists of the period often mention that the fields of the village were cultivated by inhabitants of a nearby settlement, or were rented by wealthy persons or towns for cattle breeding.<sup>98</sup> The centers of inhabited places became the growing and flourishing market towns, outside of them very few settlements existed. In this period the first mentions of later, Early Modern farmsteads appear in sources, a settlement type that changed the whole picture and structure of settlements in the next century. In the 16-17th centuries *Monostor* appears in tax list, which suggest it was deserted, but its lands were probably used for agricultural purposes and partly as meadow.

In conclusion the history of *Monostor* can be regarded as a good example of a scholarly study to face with the difficulties of settlement history in the region between the Danube and Tisza rivers. Very few written sources are known about its history, the main part of which contains unclear terminology about its inhabited places (settlements, monasteries). It calls the attention to the point that without detailed and interdisciplinary analysis of available sources only an obscure and simplified picture of settlement history can be written.

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<sup>98</sup> It was good business, because Ottoman authorities collected minimal tax after cattle breeding, but cattle were exported towards western countries, where it had a serious market. The question of export trade of Hungarian territories in the 16th century was summarized by András Kubinyi (András Kubinyi, " kés középkori magyarországi városfejl és vitás kérdései" (Questions about the Problems of Late Medieval Urban Development in Hungary), In Ákos Uherkovich, ed., *Régészet és várostörténet*, 15-33, Pécs: Janus Pannonius Múzeum, 1989

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOPOGRAPHY OF CENTRAL PART OF MONOSTOR

For lack of written data, archaeological sources, especially fieldwalking had a crucial role in the investigation. Fieldwork was carried out during the autumn of 2000 and in spring of 2001. The territory (about 20 km<sup>2</sup>) was surveyed through intensive and targeted fieldwalking, its methods were detailed in the previous chapter. During the work several sites were located in the central part of *Monostor*. Although a larger territory was investigated through fieldwork, in many cases it yielded negative results, or was prevented by conditions of the landscape (greater part of the territory is used as meadow, or in other cases the crop made the research impossible), therefore, more, partly controll- fieldwalking is need to be done in the future. This thesis aimed to complete the medieval topography, therefore, in the description special attention will be paid to medieval sites, but sites of other periods will be mentioned as well.

### *Site 1*

5 km south west from the today village of *Alsómonostor*, Sarmatian pottery was collected.

Elevation: 102,5m  
~~101,5m~~

### *Site 2*

2,5 km south from the today settlement of *Alsómonostor* and 1,5 km west of the *Aranykalász Szakszövetkezet*, between the road leading northwards and a permanent lake on a territory of 200 m x 500-600 m, the traces of an Arpadian Age settlement, and a church ruin was located. The collected archaeological material can be dated to the 13-14th centuries. The site of the church ruin was observed as a smaller hill, and indicated by mortared limestone rubble. The site can be identified

with the place excavated by Kalman Szabo in the 1930s. (See Table 1. /1,2, 4, 5) The ruin of the church was identified on aerial photo as well. (Fig. 10)

Elevation: 103,5m

### Site 3

South from the today settlement of *Alsómonostor* and 1 km west of the *Aranykaldsz Szakszövetkezet*, on the eastern side the road leading northwards, on the southern slope of a smaller hill, on a territory of 200 x 500 m place of an Arpadian Age settlement was located by few pottery. (See Table 1. 7, 8 )

Elevation: 105,0m

### Site 4

On the eastern side of the road, 1 km west from the *Aranykaldsz Szakszövetkezet*, on a territory of 200 m x 300 m larger amount of Sarmatian and fewer late medieval pottery were found. (See Table 1. /3, 6, 8)

Elevation: 105,1 m

### Site 5

On the western side of the road, at about 2 km north-west of the *Aranykaldsz Szakszövetkezet*, few prehistoric material was found.

Elevation: 104,1 m

### Site 6

1 km south-west from the today village of *Alsómonostor*, 200-300 m north - west from the previous site prehistoric and Sarmatian material was collected.

Elevation: 104,0m

## Site 7

800-1000 m south-west from the today village of *Alsőmonostor*, Pottery from the prehistoric, Sarmatian period appeared, and also few pottery from late medieval period was collected.

## Site 8

A large settlement complex with a ruin of a church was located 1 km north-east from the today village *Bugac*, 300m north from the road leading from *Bugac* towards *Kiskunfélegyháza*. The church was observed as a hill of 1,5-2 m height, with mortared shreds of limestone and brick. The territory around the church is ploughed. In the ploughed land the place of probable cemetery was located south-east from the church. According to information of local habitants the territory around the church ruin was used as cemetery until the last century. In the 1950s even pieces of standing walls were to be seen, but they were destroyed when they were used as foundation for the nearby road. The piece of a carved red limestone that was found, probably belonged to the church. Three cores of Arpadian sites were observed, where many pieces of kettles appeared. Late medieval sites were more concentrated, in the sand even the places of objects, probably houses could have been observed. The most relevant trace of a house was observed 10-15 m east from the church, where a large amount of pottery was collected (Table 5 / 5, 6, 8, 9, 10), even an iron axe (Table 4) appeared, moreover, the traces of a destroyed stove was documented. A little piece of a glass, and a fragment of a jar from *Lostice* was also found around the church. (Table 5/3,4) Well quality pottery was also collected from other parts of the settlement. (See Tables 6 and 7) The ruin of the church can be identified with that of *Kalman Szabo's "church ruin of Felsőmonostor"*.<sup>99</sup>

Elevation: 110,4-110,0m

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<sup>99</sup> See Szabo, *Az alföldi magyar nép* 120-121.

### *Site 9*

400 m north from the previously mentioned village, another medieval site was identified. Few pottery was collected from the Arpadian Age and late medieval period were collected. Probably it can be connected to the previous site. (Table 2 / 4, 6, 8, 9)

Elevation: 109 m

### *Site 10*

Near to Site 3, south from the present village of Alsomonostor, not identifiable traces of earthwork was observed. The site was the place of the terminus of narrow-gauge railway, therefore the site is badly damaged, moreover covered vegetation. Although no historical material was collected, some shreds of medieval mortar were found. Several "hills", ruins of buildings were observed, moreover four artificial lakes were identified around them. These might have been made for the watersupply of the old-type locomotive used there even in the 1950s. (Figs. 8, 21-24), therefore the site can be of modern origin, but the presence of limed mortar suggests that the place was inhabited much more earlier. The location of the site and the presence of (fish?)ponds raised the vague supposition that the monastery maybe was located there.

## MAIN FEATURES AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE SETTLEMENT NETWORK OF *MONOSTOR*

Archaeological field walking showed that also in this part of the country, conditions of natural endowment not only influence, but determine the place of the settlements. The research proved that during the centuries the places that were suitable for living, were situated above the sea-level of 102,50m. Probably this elevation shows the level of temporary bodies of water, even in the Modern Period farmsteads were built above this height. In the studied territory archaeological material of more periods were found, namely from Prehistory, from the Roman Period (Sarmatian), from the Apadian Age and from the Late Medieval periods. Traces of settlement had three major cores in the area. The first important center was located in *Alsómonostor*, near *Aranykaldsz Szakszövetkezet*. This is a concentrated site, from its size (about 200m x 5-600m) it can be concluded that it was a village,<sup>100</sup> what idea is also supported by the fact that a church ruin was identified next to the site (Site 2). According to the data of the field walking, this settlement surely existed in the late Arpadian Period, probably until the first half of the 14th century). At about 500m north of this village, vague traces of a settlement was identified (Site 3), but no connections were found between the two settlements.

The largest settlement complex was located in *Fels monostor*. Three sites from the Arpadian Age, and more pieces of a large late medieval village was found near to the church ruin. According to the data of field- walking, the most concentrated area seems to be east to the church in the Arpadian Age, where on a territory of 50-70m x 2-300m pottery from the 13-14th centuries was found. The core of the late medieval village was probably situated north and east from the church ruin. It seems that earlier settlement or settlements- the connection between the three smaller places could not

<sup>100</sup> Bálint, *Arpdd kori településhálózat*, 47.

be shown- were situated both in the vicinity and farther off the church, while the late medieval village was more concentrated near the church.

Between these two major villages, two traces of late medieval settlements were identified by the presence of few pottery. Their location presumably has connection with the roads leading from the northern to southern direction, from the village of *Fels monostor*, towards *Alsómonostor*.

In conclusion, data of fieldwalking stressed the supposition that more settlements existed in the studied territory, in spite of the fact that medieval written sources only contain direct information about the kindred monastery. Two main villages were identified: the village of *Alsómonostor* and the village of *Fels monostor*, both with churches. According to their archaeological material, the previously mentioned village of *Fels monostor* of the two was probably a remarkable settlement, from the Arpadian Period up to the Late Medieval Period. Two very well definable horizons of finds can be separated: finds from the Arpadian Age and an even stronger sign of settlement from the 15-16th centuries. The quality of the pottery found there (presence of imported pottery, stoneware, stove tiles, glass) also force the premise that a settlement of greater importance was identified there. It is worth to compare and combine the results of fieldwork with the data of sources and maps. On the one hand, if the family name "*Lucasius de Peturmonustura*", mentioned in 1349, can be connected to any settlements, than it must be the village of *Fels monostor*. On the other hand most probably this settlement was shown on the map of Lazarius in 1528.(Fig. 1), which outlines and stresses the settlement's importance.

The most interesting debate can be raised in connection with Site 10. This site is probably of medieval origin, however no material was collected there except for mortar shreds. The site was badly destroyed in the twentieth century, when the terminus of a narrow boiled railway was built there. Moreover, additional artificial earthworks and four artificial lakes were identified there. Unfortunately by means of fieldwalking only lited observations could be carried out, therefore the datation of the site was impossible.

## PÉTERMONOSTORA AND PÁLMONOSTORA

### *Historical Debate about the history and number of monasteries*

Although contemporary sources mention separately the names of *Pétermonostora* and *Pálmonostora*, there is a strong debate, whether two, or only one monastery existed in the area. The history of the monasteries can hardly be reconstructed from these data. We cannot state for sure when or by whom they were founded, Pétermonostora was founded presumably before 1219 by the Becse-Gergely kindred, as the members are mentioned in connection with the monastery, even as patrons. *Pálmonostora* does not appear by itself in the sources, from the 14th century, when it is mentioned together with *Pétermonostor*, we can assume the same. The order they belonged to stay hidden in the sources as well, but if we consider the supposed date of their foundation the most probable is that they were Benedictine abbeys.<sup>101</sup> Indirectly we hear about the privileges donated by king Béla<sup>102</sup> and *pertinenciis* connected to them. The time or period and the causes of their disappearance are also unknown, what seems to be sure from the sources is that they are mentioned *as possessio* from the middle of the 14th century onwards.

As *Pálmonostora* never appears in sources alone (nevertheless *Pétermonostora* has more separate mentioning), the possibility that there was only one monastery dedicated to Saint Peter and Paul at the same time can be raised.<sup>103</sup> The first and most important task before trying to locate the site of the monastery or monasteries is to clarify whether there were two monasteries in the area or there was only one monastery. During the study, the following questions were examined:

1. Are there any more examples in Hungary or in the neighboring territories for such a "twin monastery system"?

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<sup>101</sup> Monasteries dedicated to St Peter and St Paul founded before 1300 were all Benedictine abbeys, except the Augustine Friary of Horpács. See Romhányi, *Kolostorok*

<sup>102</sup> Probably Bela III (1172-1196) or Bela IV (1205-1235) is mentioned there.

<sup>103</sup> There are several examples not only from Hungary, but from all over Europe. In Hungary the monasteries of *Tata* (Benedictine abbey founded probably by baillif *Tata* in the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century), *Bodrogmonostor* (Benedictine abbey founded in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century), *Poroszló* (Benedictine abbey, founded before 1219 by the *Sárványvecse* kindred), *Szerencs*



2. What could have been the reason for founding two monasteries so near to each other?
3. Are there any examples that the whole title of a monastery is not mentioned in sources?

If we examine early monasteries of Hungary that were founded by kindred, noble men or noble families<sup>104</sup> we can hardly find any examples of founding two monasteries so close to each other. There is only one case, which can be used as comparison: the case and history of *Fels adorjdn* and *Alsóadorjdn*<sup>105</sup> These monasteries were probably founded by the *Haraszt* kindred, but unfortunately there are only few written data about them. They were probably destroyed in the 14th century, the cause of their disappearance is unknown.

We can also find cases when the whole title of the church does not appear in the sources: for example in the case of Bodrogmonostor, which monastery was also devoted to St Peter and Paul, the title is usually mentioned as *ecclesiae St Peter*, or *abbas de St Petro*, or *monasterii Sancti Petri prope Bodrog*; only once, in 1379 is the whole title is mentioned. This is the only proof that the monastery was devoted to St Peter and St Paul.<sup>106</sup>

The *Becse-Gergely* kindred is known to be one of the most potential and wealthy kindred of medieval Hungary from the Arpadian Age onwards. Their estates were located all around in the country. The kindred also possessed great lands between the Danube and Tisza rivers.<sup>107</sup> The reasons why kindred founded monasteries and the role of the monasteries in the life of the kindred are highly debated among scholars, however, it is usually accepted that kindred monasteries used to be one of the most

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(Benedictine abbey founded before 1247 by the *Bogátradvány* kindred),, Dominican Friary of Brasso (founded in 1323), Augustine Friary of *Horpács* (founded before 1295). (Romhányi, *Kolostorok*)

<sup>104</sup> By early I mean those that were founded before the middle of the 13th century.

<sup>105</sup> Both monasteries are located in today Vojvodina, north from *Senta*.

*Alsóadorjdn* was presumably a Benedictine abbey, it is only mentioned in 1340. Then its church was dedicated to Virgin Mary and its patron was the *Gesztei* family. Probably it was destroyed in the 14th century. Its ruins were located by László Szekeres. (See Romhányi, *Kolostorok* 7.)

*Fels adorjdn* was also a Benedictine abbey. Considerablz it was founded before the 13th century. In 1271 it is mentioned as *ecclesia*, as a monastery only the charter of 1299 mentions, at that time it was ruined. In spite of this, in 1344 its patronage is mentioned. The church of the monastery was dedicated to Saint Martin, however there was another church in the neighboring village devoted to Saint George. Its patron in 1299 was the *Haraszt* kindred. (Romhányi, *Kolostorok* 7-8.)

<sup>106</sup> Csánki, *Magyarország történeti földrajza* Vol. 2., 194, ÁMTF I., 713, Romhányi, *Kolostorok* 10.

<sup>107</sup> ÁMTF I. 887

important links between the branches and members of the kindred.<sup>108</sup> From the sources it turns out that a monastery was held to be valuable because 1. Estates or other incomes were connected to them, 2. The building was usually defensible place, which gave founders and later patrons political strength; 3. It gave a certain prestige, as the memory of the kindred members buried there, the masses celebrated and the prayers told for their soul could have been an important aspect as well.<sup>109</sup> Howsoever, there were several remarkable kindred that have never established a monastery, and there were kindred that founded more monasteries. The Becse-Gergely kindred founded a remarkable number of monasteries,<sup>110</sup> all in all four,<sup>111</sup> which can be explained with the different location of the estates owned by different branches of the kindred. But there must have been a kind of tradition, claim or expectation among the members to found a monastery.<sup>112</sup> At the same time the relatively high number of founded monasteries does not give satisfying explanation to the question, why two monasteries could have been found at almost the same place.<sup>113</sup> Unfortunately there are not enough data about the surely existed parallel cases of *Fels* - and *Alsóadorjdn*, and even we do not know the real distance between them.<sup>114</sup>

At this stage of the research I can only presume not state that in the Arpadian Age in *Csongrád* county there was only one monastery founded by the *Becse-Gergely* kindred, which was devoted to St Peter and St Paul. For some unknown reasons the whole title of the monastery does not appear in the sources. The accidental mentioning of St Paul in the title made scholars suppose that there were two monasteries located in a close neighborhood, which became a cliché in scholarly literature. Nevertheless, further investigations, fieldwork surveys may destroy or support this theory; until the

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<sup>108</sup> János Karácsonyi, *A magyar nemzetségek története a XIV. század közepéig* (History of the Hungarian Kindreds until the 14th century). Budapest: n.p., 1900., György Györffy, "A nemzetségtől a vármegyéig, a törzstől az orszáig" (From the kindred to the county, from the tribes to the county). *Századok* 92(1958), Erik Fügedi, "Sepelierunt corpus eius in monasterio proprio. A nemzetségi monostorok" (Sepelierunt Corpus Eius in Monasterio Proprio: Kindred Monasteries). *Századok* 125 (1991):

<sup>109</sup> Fügedi, *Sepelierunt* .53

<sup>110</sup> Only the Gutkeled and Aba kindred founded more (6) monasteries.

<sup>111</sup> *Bátmonostor*, *Dienesmonostor*, *Bethlenmonostor* and *Pitermonostor* (if we do not consider *Pálmonostor* )

<sup>112</sup> Erik Fügedi raised this question. Fügedi, *Sepelierunt*

<sup>113</sup> Even if it does not preclude the possibility.

<sup>114</sup> Maybe data about founding circumstances would help us to find out more about the reasons.

appearance and identification of ruins, the question cannot be solved, and the possibility that two monasteries existed separately cannot be precluded.

### Localization

Among the descriptive sources of the Early Modern Age only Mátyás Bél refer to this territory in his work, writing that *Fels monostor* is an ancient and fertile territory,<sup>115</sup> and in *Alsó-* or *Nagymonostor* grape (wine) and wheat are produced. At the same time there is no data about the existence of the monastery.<sup>116</sup>

The existence of the monastery (monasteries) was not discussed or discovered until the systematic source-collecting project of the 19th century. It was Frigyes Pesthy, who first tried to identify and locate the monastery.<sup>117</sup> He unfortunately located the sites south-eastern from the town *Kiskunfélegyháza*, beside the so called *Péteri-tő*. As a result newly established villages were named *Pétermonostora* and *Pdlmonostora* in the 19th century.

Later Dezs Csánki also referred to the existence of *Pétermonostora*, but could not locate it. In the 1960s György Györffy finally identified *Monostorpuszta* as the place of the monasteries. As he supposed that there were two monasteries, he located *Pétermonostora* to *Fels monostor* (northern part of *Monostorpuszta*), while *Pdlmonostora* to *Alsómonostor* (southern part of *Monostorpuszta*). Moreover, he tried to connect the church ruin excavated in *Fels monostor* by Kálmán Szabó.<sup>118</sup> Piroska Biczó accepted Györffy's view about the number and location, when she compiled the list of once existing churches of the region.<sup>119</sup> In the latest scholarly literature Beatrix Romhányi also accepted that Peter- and Palmonostora existed separately, and after

<sup>115</sup> Iványosi-Szabó, *Helytörténeti* 91.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Pesthy, Frigyes. Magyarország helynevei, történeti, földrajzi és nyelvészeti tekintetben (Place-Names of Hungary from the Historical, Geographical and Linguistical Point of View). Vol. 1. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1888.

<sup>118</sup> Györffy, 1963 p.899. It must be stated that Kálmán Szabó himself never connected the churches that he discovered with either of the monasteries. He interpreted them as village churches. (Szabó, Kálmán. *Az alföldi magyar nép m vel történeti emlékei* (Cultural Heritage of the People Living in the Great Plain). Bibliotheca Humanitatis Historica. Budapest: Országos Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1938.)

<sup>119</sup> Biczó, Piroska. *Adatok Bács-Kiskun megye középkori építészetéhez* (Data about Medieval Architecture in Bács-Kiskun County). Múzeumi Kutatások Bács-Kiskun Megyében (1986): 71-80.

Györffy she located Pétermonostora to Fels monostor.<sup>120</sup> Recently László Koszta discussed the ecclesiastical institutions of the southern part of the Great Plain. He also accepted the opinion of previous publications, when he discussed two separate monasteries.<sup>121</sup>

On historical maps the territory is shown in details on the map of the First Ordinance Survey in the 18th century. There is a ruin of a church named *Rudera Puszta Templum Monostor* in the northern part of the estate *Monostor*, between two parallel roads leading from northern to southern direction.(Fig. 3) However, on the Second Ordinance Survey also a ruin of a church appears, but in the southern part of the estate *Monostor*, between two smaller lakes. (Fig.4.) This depiction is repeated on the maps of the Third Ordinance Survey from the 19th century, moreover, it can be seen on estate maps and other surveys until the 1950s.(Fig. 5, 6, 7) The modern (from the 1970s and 1995) detailed maps (1:10000) do not refer to any similar features in the landscape. (Fig.8, 9)

A series of aerial photographs were also available about the territory from the 1950s.<sup>122</sup> On one of the photos a small oval-like feature was to be seen in the landscape between two lakes, which raised the possibility of identifying this object with the ruins of the church shown by maps in the southern part of *Monostor*.

### ***Conclusions in the Light of the Present Study***

In conclusion, the history, the localization and even the number of the existed monasteries do not seem to be a solved problem. It became a cliché in scholarly literature that *Pétermonostora* and *Pdlmonostora* existed separately, as well as their location. Nevertheless, the detailed analysis of sources, and especially fieldwork do not strengthen this fact.

Detailed investigation of written data and comparative analysis of similar historical cases concerning the title and location of monasteries showed that there was only one example in medieval Hungary, namely in *Fels adorjdn* and *Alsóadorjdn*, where two monasteries were situated in close neighborhood. Moreover, several cases

<sup>120</sup> Romhányi, 2000

<sup>121</sup> Koszta, *Dél-Magyar ország*, map on page 53.

<sup>122</sup> I discovered them in the Institute of Military History (of Hungary). Catalogue number L-34-51-A-d

were found of early kindred monasteries being devoted to both St Peter and St Paul, and there are also examples, when the whole title of the monastery does not always appear in written sources.

During the field-work it became clear that non of the located sites can be identified with the monastery, therefore, the ruins that can be seen on historical maps cannot be identified with the ruins of the monastery. Although three major settlement complexes were situated in the territory, two of them with church, non of the sites can be interpreted as the place of the monastery. In *Fels monostor* an extended graveyard and a larger settlement existed from the Arpadian Age to the late medieval period near the church (which can be identified with the ruin excavated by Kálmán Szabó). There would be a greater chance to identify the place of the monastery with the ruin of *Alsómonostor*, but the extension of the located site also suggest that a village existed there. Therefore, the two churches can be identified with parish churches, what can also be supported with the existence of cemeteries around them. In summary: it is not probable that the monastery was built in the middle of a village, as all of the parallel examples of monasteries in the area farther from settlements<sup>123</sup> Moreover, the architectural features of known similar monasteries suggest that they were not built as a simple parish church, all of them were three-naved, larger churches, probably with two front towers.<sup>124</sup> But here the fact must be mentioned that in recent investigations the possibility, that smaller early kindred monasteries were built in a village as an overage parish church and they functioned like these, raised.<sup>125</sup>

Finally, the investigations did not support the results of previous scholarly work. Probably only one monastery existed in *Monostor*, that cannot be located to either of known archaeological sites of the studied area. Although several questions were let open, the research showed new directions for further investigations, which, hopefully, will solve the problems.

<sup>123</sup> For example *Ellésmonostor*, *Bátmonostor* (the *curia* was only built and used in the 14-15th centuries), Szer, *Csoltmonostor*. (Pavai, *Ellismonostor*, Biczó, *A középkori Bátmonostor*, Trogmayer, *Magnum aldumas*, and Irén Juhász, "A Csolt nemzetség monostora" (Monastery of the Csolt Kindred) In Kollár, *A középkori Dél-Alföld is Szer*

<sup>124</sup> See the previous note for examples.

<sup>125</sup> Informations from József Laszlovszky.

## MONOSTOR IN THE ROAD STRUCTURE OF THE AREA

Although main features of medieval road structure of the territory between the Danube and Tisza rivers were discussed in previous scholarly literature, it is still uncertain how smaller settlements were connected to the network.<sup>126</sup> There are two bases for reconstruction: written documents and historical maps. These sources can outline the main directions of roads, but finally the real place of the road is defined by micro-regional conditions of natural endowments.

*Monostor* lies in the middle of the Interfluvium region, near the main road leading from the north-west towards the south, connecting the two important centers of Pest and Szeged. This *via magna* was one of the most important route for internal and international trade, also serving the settlements of *Tölgy*, *Körös*, *Kecskemét*, *Félegyház*, *Sáregyház* and *Szer*. The road structure of the micro-region covered by the thesis can be investigated -because lack of written data- with similar methods as settlements: through the analysis of historical maps and fieldwalking. In the studied territory natural conditions are crucially influenced by the permanent and temporary presence of small lakes and bodies of waterflows. As far as can be determined from contemporary data, the circumstances in the Middle Ages were similar to the Early Modern and present day situation.<sup>127</sup> Therefore, maps play a crucial role in the attempt of reconstruction.<sup>128</sup>

The inner road structure of *Monostor* depicted on maps from the earliest representations till nowadays (See Figs 3-9), show nearly the same system: there seems to be two main roads leading from northward to southern direction. Probably

<sup>126</sup> ÁMTF I, 886, Blazovich, László. "Az Alföld 14-16. századi úthálózatának vázlata" (Main Features of the Road Structure of the Hungarian Great Plain) *Tanulmányok Csongrád Megye Történetéből* 26(1998): 51-61, Kubinyi, András. *Városfejlés és vásárhálózat a középkori Alföldön és Alföld szélén* (Urbanization and Market Network in the Medieval Hungarian Great Plain). Dél-Alföldi Évszázadok 14. Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 2000. and also Vályi, Katalin. "Szermonostor és a mezőváros középkori kereskedelmének európai kapcsolatai" (International Trade Connections of Szermonostor and the Market Town). *Studia Archaeologica I, A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve* (1995): 265-277.

<sup>127</sup> The natural endowments of the region is discussed in another chapter in details.

<sup>128</sup> It was also proven in other parts of the country that road structure depicted on the maps from the Early Modern period (18-19th centuries) can be the basis of investigations of medieval roads. See for example: Kovalovszki, 1957, Miiller, 1971, Müller, 1975, Valter, 1974

they both lead from Kecskemét towards Majsza. These roads have an unambiguous reaction and interaction on medieval settlement structure of the territory, because all three major places, where traces of larger settlements were revealed by fieldwork, lies along these two roads. This fact also may be a demonstration of the roads' medieval origin. In the north-western part of *Monostor*, the settlement of *Fels monostor* was located on the right side of the western road, while the two settlement complexes of Alsómonostor lie along the eastern road. According to historical maps, the two roads met in the southern part of *Monostor* around the deserted village of *Alsómonostor*. Although the exact place of their junction was not located during fieldwork, the fact that it was near to the previously mentioned settlement has special importance: it was the point that travelers of both roads had to pass, therefore they had to pass the village as well.

Finally, it, how these two roads were connected to regional network: can also be determined from maps: in the northern direction probably both led towards Kecskemét, and not far from the northern border of *Monostor* both roads met the east-west road leading from *Kolon* to *Félegyház*. At this point the regional road reaches the *via magna*. In the southern part, after their junction in *Alsómonostor* the road went on towards *Majosszállása* and *Halas*.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although topographical investigations never has final results, because appearance of new data can change the results of any investigations, all studies have to yield the more or less detailed and precise picture of the investigated area. This thesis focused on a very small micro-region, on the central part of *Monostor*. During this one-year project, only the main features of the landscape were analyzed, and probably only the main settlements of the area were identified. Therefore the results or the conclusions of the research are limited, however contain relevant data about the medieval settlement structure and its transformations.

The history of the study area fits into the general development of the county without great differences. It was inhabited probably right after the Hungarian conquest, the legacy of conquering Hungarians were identified in the region. Although very few written sources survived from the next three centuries, it can be outlined, that the majority of lands belonged to royal property, however significant private and ecclesiastical properties are known to be there. Several smaller monasteries were founded by kindred, nobles in the period, one of them was *Péter* and *Pdlmonostora*, founded by the *Becse-Gergely* kindred. Most of the monasteries did not survived the thirteenth century (they were destroyed by Tartars or were depopulated for some other reasons), the same happened to studied monastery. There is one big difference: sources do not reveal, whether there were two monasteries, or only one monastery existed, that was presumably devoted to both St Peter and Paul. Detailed investigation seems to support the latter solution, but there are no direct evidences about this question. More, mainly archaeologically oriented research must be carried out to locate the site of the monastery or monasteries, because neither of the previously supposed church ruins were identified with the church of the monastery, they can rather be interpreted as parish churches. Research also revealed more settlements from the Arpadian Age (See the previous chapters), among the two had probably church, and these were situated both in the southern and the northern part of



the research area. Therefore the investigation seems to support the idea that in site the lack of sources, a dense settlement structure existed in the region.<sup>129</sup>

Although the monasteries vanish from the late medieval sources, data outlines the estate, the *possessio Monostor* stayed a unit throughout the centuries. More late medieval settlements were located in the study area, the most significant of them was situated in *Fels monostor* (Site 8). According to the results of the fieldwalking, the settlement even existed in the 16th century. The data of archaeological research can be combined with the investigation of historical maps. Both the map of *Lazarius* and on the map from 1740 depict *Monostor*, what underlines its importance.

The natural resources and their impact upon settlement structure was also studied. This determined that the natural endowment played and still plays a crucial role in the settlement structure of the area, moreover, it defines those routes that were used during the centuries. Settlements and the roads connecting them were mainly situated above the sea-level height of 102-103m, which probably shows the borders or level of more or less temporary bodies of water. This fact is stressed with the fact that identified sites (and not only the medieval ones!) were found very close to each other, moreover they were all situated along the roads, which are shown from the earliest depictions on maps.

In final conclusion, this thesis tried to test how those modern, interdisciplinary aimed methods can be applied in a specially chosen micro-region, that has never been investigated, and how, in what extent they can be used. The results of the research justified that through complex and detailed analysis of available sources, not only the historical settlement structure and its transformations can be outlined of the territory that is without written sources concerning settlements, but other aspects, such as medieval road structure, historical conditions of nature can be studied. The research also showed the difficulties of work methods in the area. The larger part (60-70%) of land is not ploughed, used as meadow, or fallow, therefore, archaeological data, namely fieldwalking could yield only limited results. Aerial photographs taken about this area were analyzed, but it turned out that this territory was hardly studied through this way, only the church ruin of *Alsomonostor* was identified. Because this, archaeological photography will have a great part in future investigations. Finally,

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<sup>129</sup> Bálint, *A Duna Tisza köz*

however several questions were let open in connection with the monastery, the research made clear that the applied methods can be used, and worth to be used in the chosen micro-region, therefore made the grounds of the larger project of the proposed Ph.D. dissertation.

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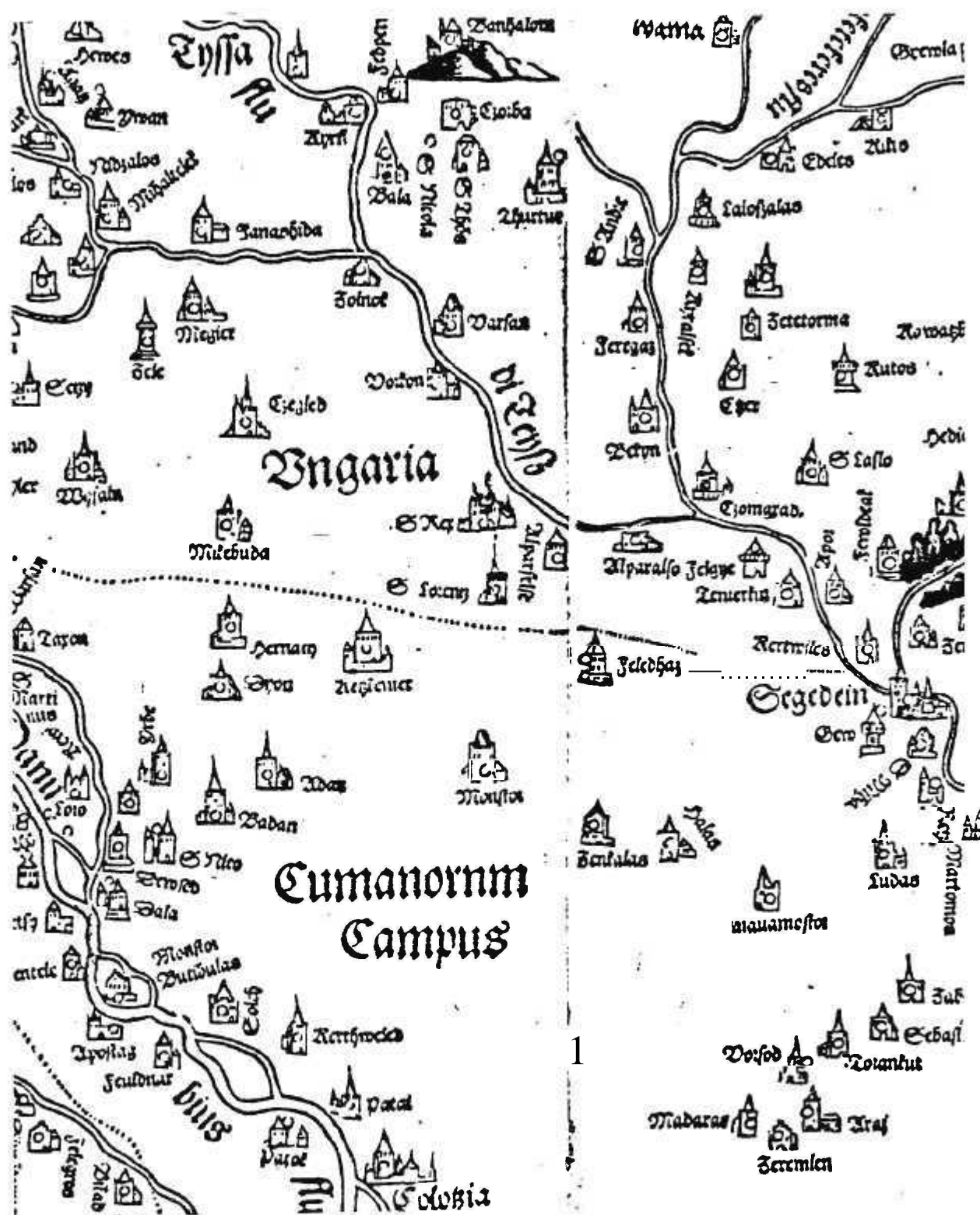


Fig. 1.





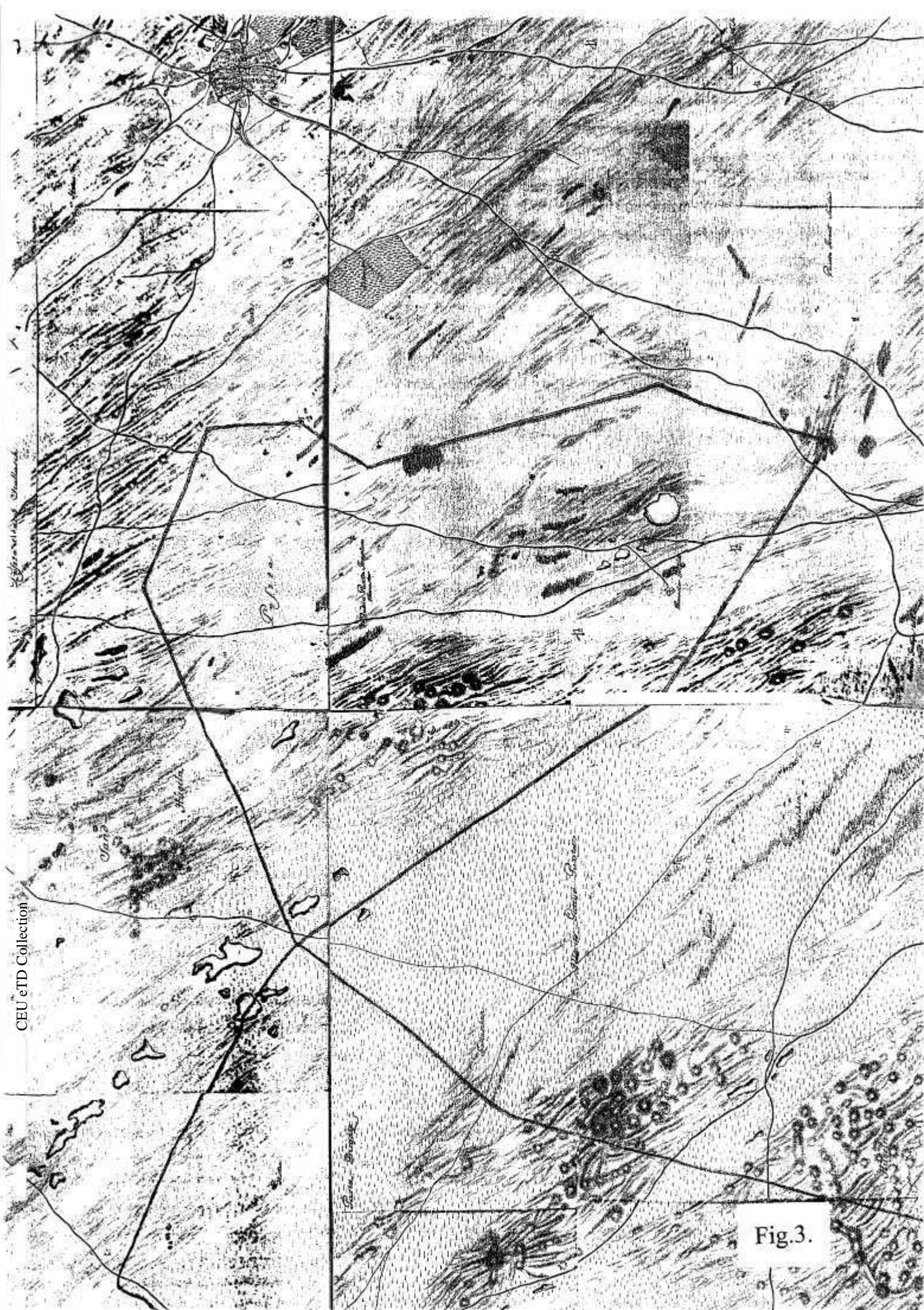


Fig.3.





Fig.5.





## KECSKEMÉRT

székes királyi város

területéhez tartozó

## BÍGACZ-MONOSTOR

TÉRKÉPE

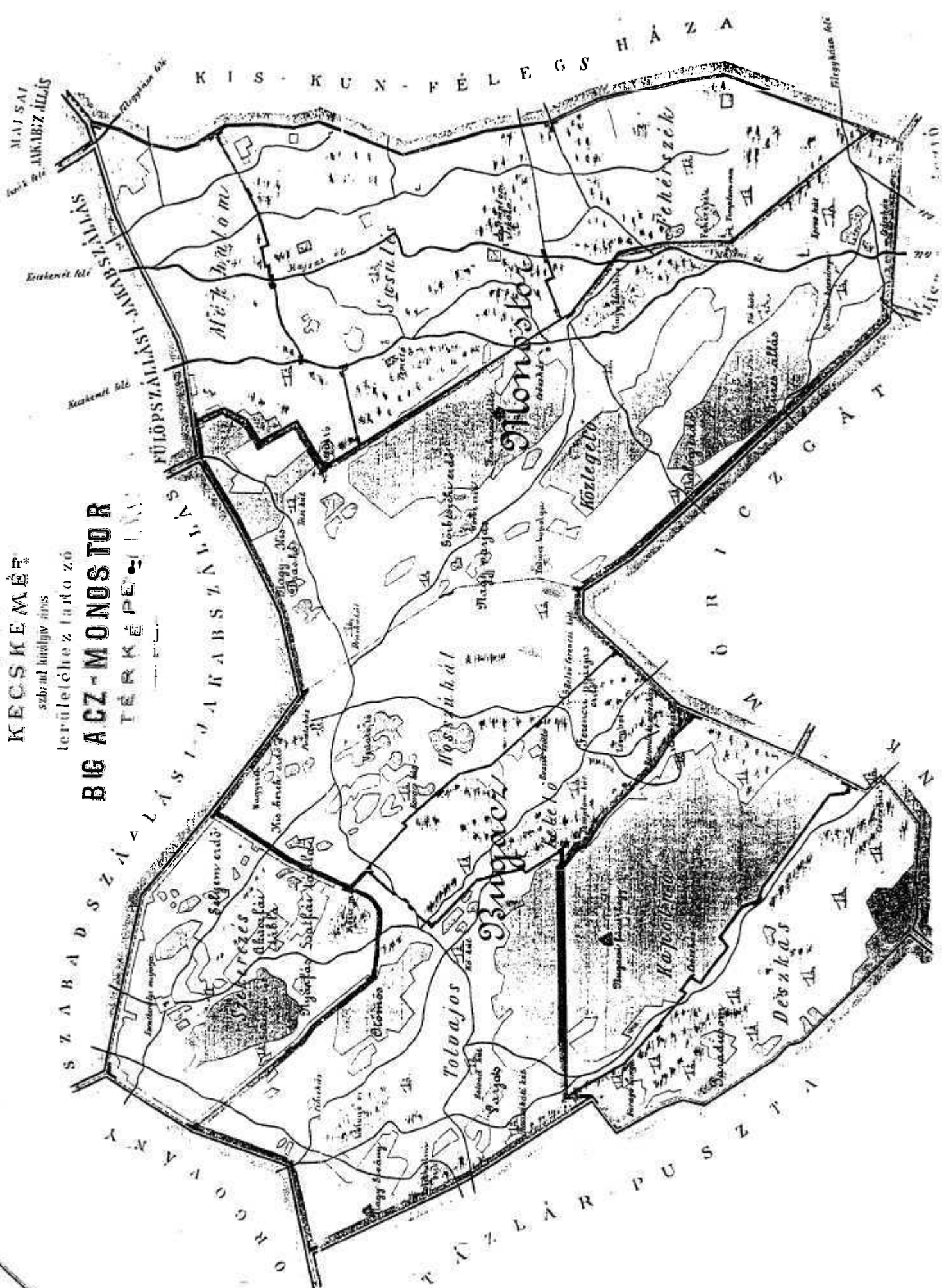


Fig.7.



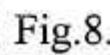


Fig. 10.





Fig. 11.

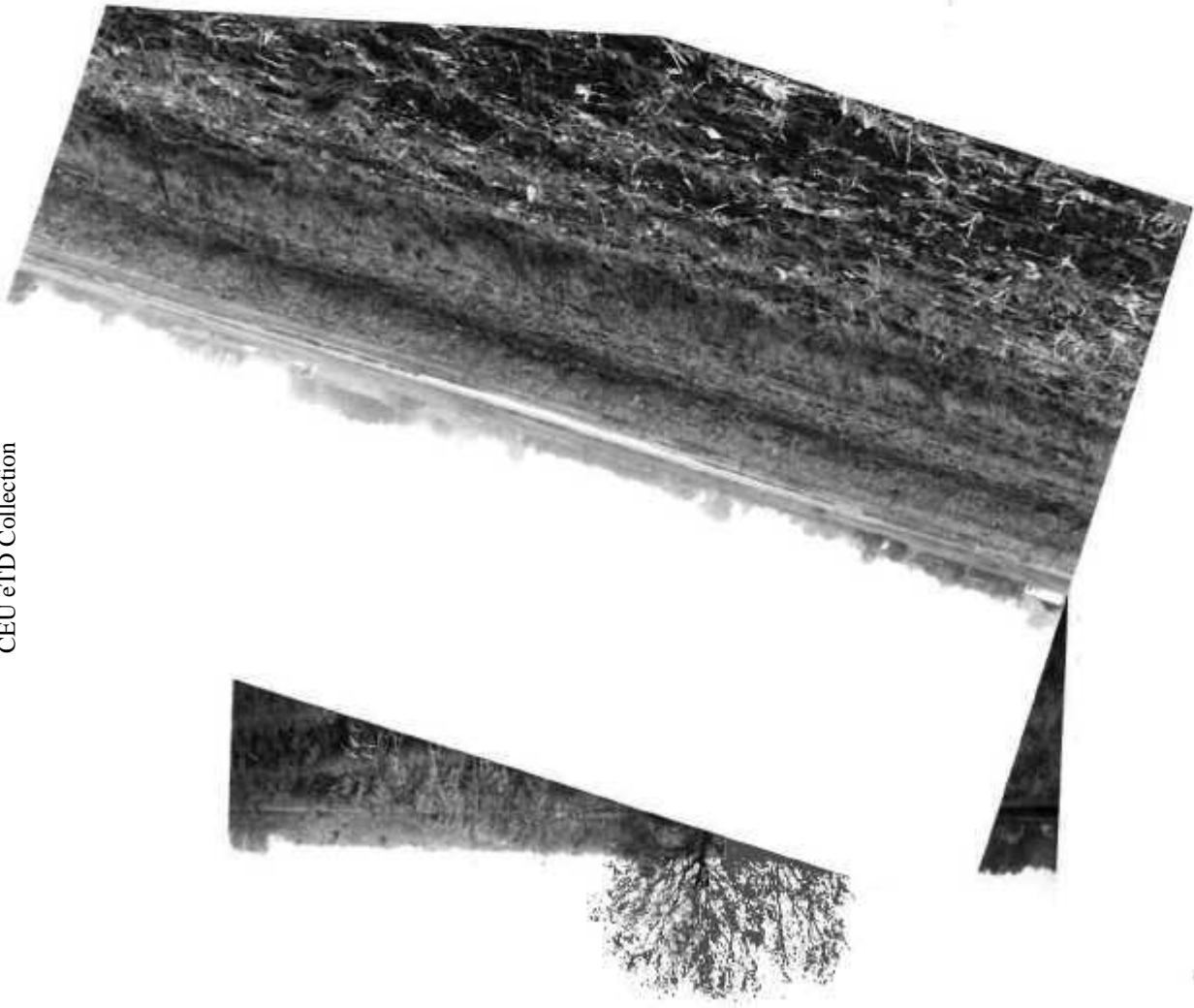
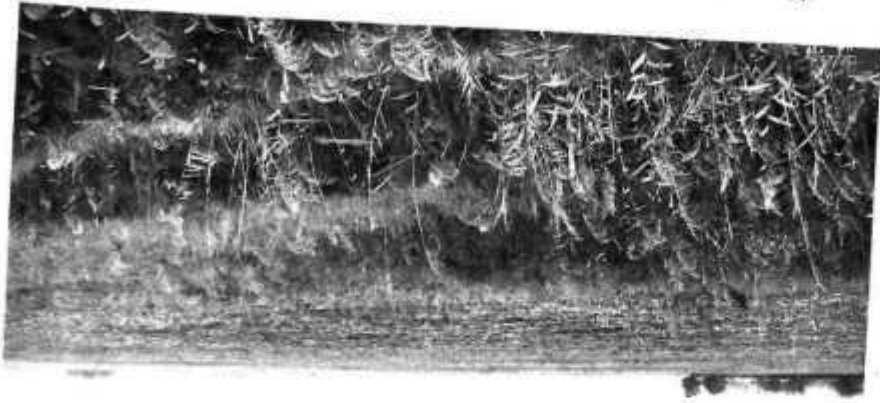




Fig. 12.

*r*





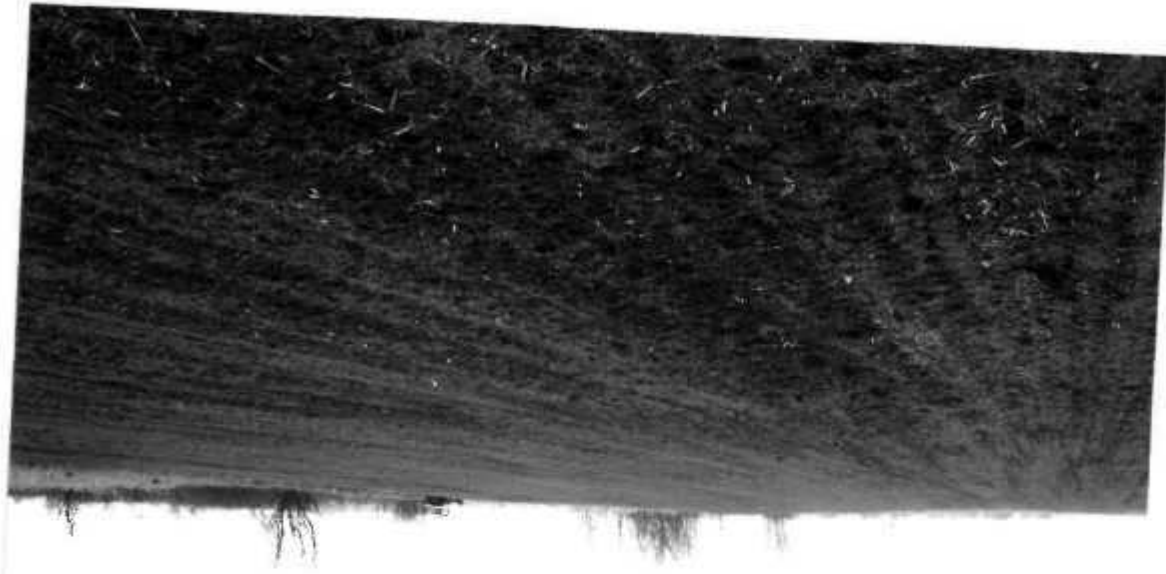




Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 21



Fig. 22





XV\*

