

POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

**Life under the shadow of the Ottoman
Empire's Expansion (15th–16th centuries)**

Proceedings of the 3rd international conference
3th-5th October 2019, Timișoara

Editor
Zsuzsanna Kopeczny

Editura Mega
Cluj-Napoca
2021



CONSILIUL
JUDEȚEAN
TIMIȘ



MUZEUL NAȚIONAL al **BANATULUI**

DTP and Cover:
Mega Publishing House

On the cover: Ottoman miniature depicting the siege led by Kara Ahmed Pasha against the fortress of Timișoara
(after Jancsó Árpád – Balla Lóránd, *Temesvár régi ábrázolásai. 16-18. század*, Marosvásárhely, 2005, p. 50.)

© Authors, 2021

Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naționale a României
Politics and society in Central and South-East Europe: life under the shadow of the Ottoman Empire's expansion (15th-16th centuries): 3-5th October 2019, Timișoara / ed.: Zsuzsanna Kopeczny. – Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2021
Conține bibliografie
ISBN 978-606-020-359-9
I. Kopeczny, Zsuzsanna (ed.)
94



EDITURA MEGA | www.edituramega.ro
e-mail: mega@edituramega.ro

CONTENTS

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, POPULATIONS

Beatrix F. Romhányi

Populations and Religions: the Transformation of the Danube-Tisza Mureş/Maros Interfluve between the Mid-Thirteenth and the late Sixteenth Century..... 9

Aleksandar Krstić

The Orthodox Church in Northern Serbia during the First Century of Ottoman Rule (1459–1557)21

Zoltán Iusztin

Testimonies about Mobility in the Becskerek Nahije in the 16th Century.....39

MILITARY AND POLITICAL HISTORY

Ligia Boldea

The Banat elites involving in defence of the Magyar Kingdom's southern border during Sigismund of Luxemburg's age..... 61

Elek Szaszko

From Bestowal to Betrayal. The Military and Political Role of Nicolas Csáki and Nicolas Marcali between 1399 and 1401..... 69

Neven Isailović

The Battle of Lašva (1415) – The Greatest Hungarian Defeat after Nicopolis Revisited.....83

Adrian Magina

As the Turks Moved on Them... New Documents on Severin and the Lower Parts of the Hungarian Kingdom Before the Battle of Mohács.....93

Nándor Virovecz

Shifting Allegiances and the Questions of Resilience: Lords of the Hungarian and Transylvanian Border During the Fortress Wars of 1560's..... 101

Florin Nicolae Ardelean

The Siege of Timișoara from 1596 in the Works of Bernardino Beccari Da Sacile..... 117

Zoltán Péter Bagi

The 1596 draft on a Future Fleet on Dnieper.....125

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES AND ARTIFACTS

Bogdan Alin Craiovan, Dorel Micle

Taking a Stroll on the Streets of Ottoman Timisoara. Archaeological Data Regarding Timisoara's Street Layout during the late middle Age.....133

Szabolcs Kondorosy

From Imperial to Local. Clay Tobacco Pipes In Front Of The Walls Of Buda Castle.....151

István Pánya, Szabolcs Rosta

Research summary of the Turkish fortress of Dunapataj – Szentkirály169

Erika Wicker

The 17th Century Jewelry Hoard from Rácszentpéter (today Sánpetru Mare, Timiș County, Romania) (poster).....187

**ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY,
POPULATIONS**

POPULATIONS AND RELIGIONS: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE DANUBE-TISZA- MUREŞ/MAROS INTERFLUVE BETWEEN THE MID- THIRTEENTH AND THE LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Beatrix F. Romhányi

Keywords: *demography, monastic orders, catholic parishes, Banat.*

Abstract: *The region described in the title – historically known as Banat (Hung. Temesköz or Bánság) – was in almost permanent change after the Mongol Invasion of 1241–1242. The area is characterised with a special landscape including extended wetlands, meandering water courses and the sands of Alibunar on the one hand, and with important economic resources, such as the mines around Resica/Reşița and the fords of Haram/Banatska Palanka and Keve/Kovin, on the other. To these factors we can add the frontier zone between Latin and Orthodox Christianity and – from the late 14th century – the conflict zone between the Hungarian Kingdom and the expanding Ottoman Empire. All these factors had their impact on the region's society. The main trends of ethnic and religious transformations can be traced partly through written evidence directly related to migration, partly through indicators referring to the above phenomena indirectly.*

When speaking about demographic issues before modern times, that is before statistical records have been collected regularly and systematically, one always has to be aware of the fact that historians need to work with indicators, more or less closely related to population numbers and population density. That is true even in the case of tax registers usually exploited in such investigations, and it is even more true when we deal with other sources which are more loosely connected to population number and density. Nevertheless, it is worth making effort to find good indicators, since a good model of demographic developments can contribute to the better understanding of political, economic or military issues, as well.

In East Central Europe, medieval sources suffered great losses. It is well known that in the Kingdom of Hungary hardly any documents of the royal archives have survived, and other – ecclesiastic, urban or family – archives are also far from being intact. The lack of written evidence is especially striking in the southern regions of the kingdom, where the pressure of the Ottoman Empire was present from the end of the fourteenth century, and kept on increasing until the sixteenth-century collapse of the kingdom. However, in the southern strip along the frontier, it is even more important to investigate mobility and demographic transformation for to assess the long-term impact of Ottoman wars. When looking for possible indicators, the main criteria are that the data sets be in clear correlation with the population, and they need to be collected for the entire territory of the kingdom, not only for the smaller region in question. It is also important that we need several time sections, therefore, data that are homogenous throughout the Middle Ages, are especially precious.

* Károli Gáspár University of Reformed Church, Budapest, Hungary, e-mail: t.romhanyi@gmail.com

With the above in mind, there are two data sets covering the whole country: the monastic network and the network of rural churches, later parishes.¹ Of these, the monastic network is more suitable for to make several time cross-sections, too, as its development over the centuries has been well documented. As for the churches or parishes, their network was obviously denser, thus they give us better information about the settled and unsettled areas. Besides them, there are some other data sets that are limited either in time, or in space, but which are useful as complementary sources for to refine the image derived from the first two data sets. Such are certain archaeological finds, especially for the period before 1200, the sixteenth-century Ottoman sources (mainly the *defterler*), and some other, sporadic hints, as for instance names, data on the military capacity, or the presence of protestant preachers.

To begin with the most complex series of maps, let us see the monastic network. (**Maps 1–5**) In the period between 1240 and 1580, there are three major phenomena we can observe. First, the region we are interested in, that is the territory of today Banat delimited by the rivers Danube, Tisza, and Mureş/Maros, as well as by the Reşiţa Mountains (in the East) was never a densely settled area.² As it is reflected in the monastic network before the Mongol Invasion, most of the population concentrated then on the Mureş/Maros.³ Around 1330, some monasteries were established in the southern part, adjacent to the Devil's Dyke.⁴ These monasteries disappeared before the mid-fifteenth century, and some Bosnian, later Observant Franciscan friaries were established instead. However, most of them were abandoned before 1500. At the same time, the first Orthodox monasteries were founded in the same region. The last map shows the situation around 1580: by then, there were no more Latin-rite monasteries in the Banat, but a rather dense network of small Orthodox communities emerged, also roughly following the Devil's Dyke.

The map of the parishes listed in the papal title list of 1332–1337 shows a slightly different picture. (**Map 6**) The northern part along the Mures/Maros River and the strip of the Devil's Dyke were densely settled, and some parishes appear already in and around the mountainous part of the Banat, too. There were parishes even in the western part of the region, although not very numerous, meaning that there was a certain population density there. But apparently, neither the number of people, nor their economic capacity was enough for to sustain any monastic or mendicant community. The southwestern part, however, was empty. In this case, the lack of all type of church institutions is a clear sign meaning that that specific area of the Banat was uninhabited. Knowing the natural

¹ The network of medieval parishes as we use that term, did not emerge before the mid-thirteenth century. Before that period, it is better to avoid the term, and rather speak about rural churches, without further specification. The birth of the parish was for a great part connected to the general practice of baptizing infants. Child baptism can be traced back to the early Christian era, but this is not the same as to baptize infants practically at birth, as it gradually became usual in the Middle Ages. In the late antiquity and early medieval centuries, the administration of the sacrament of baptism was still tied to Easter, except for cases of emergency. By the mid-twelfth century, when the *Decretum Gratiani* was being compiled, there were already signs that the practice of infant baptism had gone beyond emergencies and was increasingly expected, which is of course not independent of the fact that by that time Christianity already ingrained in society. In parallel, the Church sought to keep the religious practice of the faithful under increasing control, including the regulated reception of the sacraments. This expectation could only be met if the church was close to the faithful, since e.g. in the case of infant baptism, it would have been life-threatening for both the mother and the new-born to travel longer distances, either in winter or summer. (Cf. SENN, Frank C.: Introduction to Christian Liturgy, Fortress Press, 2012, 159–161.)

² About the settlement history of the Banat see F. ROMHÁNYI, Beatrix: The Banat region as reflected in the mirror of the changing ecclesiastic network. *Banatica (Reşiţa)* 29 (2019) 17–30. About the history Timișoara/Temesvár, the political, economic and military centre of the region, with data on the broader region as well, see PETROVIC, István: A középkori Temesvár – Fejezetek a Bega-parti város 1552 előtti történetéből. (Capitulum IV.). Szeged, 2008.

³ About the analysis of the correlation between the changes of the monastic network and the transformation of the settlement network see: F. ROMHÁNYI, Beatrix: Kolostorhálózat – településhálózat – népesség. A középkori Magyar Királyság demográfiai helyzetének változásaihoz. *Történelmi Szemle* 57 (2015), 1–49.

⁴ The huge earth work built by the Romans remained a decisive landmark of the Great Hungarian Plain till modern times. The Devil's Dyke seems to have influence the settlement network especially in the late Middle Ages, and it probably served as a sort of “highway” as well.

environment and the spatial structure of the region, it is quite clear that people were needed to maintain the infrastructure (roads) belonging to the fords on the rivers, but the extensive wetlands and the sand of Deliblat were not suitable for a denser settlement.

Besides the identification of the inhabited areas within the Banat region, the analysis of the changes of the monastic network revealed another aspect, too. The appearance of Bosnian Franciscan friaries in the 1360s was connected to the immigration of Bulgarian, orthodox refugees, who left their homeland after the failed attempt of King Louis I to establish the Banat of Vidin. The new friaries – probably not founded but supported by the king – were subordinated to the vicar of Bosnia under the name of Bulgarian custodia, albeit none of them was on Bulgarian territory properly meant.

After the first Battle of Kosovo (1389) and the defeat of Nicopolis (1396) the region began to change again. Due to the Ottoman attacks of the 1390s, several church institutions were destroyed, among them two Pauline monasteries (Gătaia/Gátalja and *Boldogkő*, probably in the region of Bocşa Română) and a Franciscan friary (Ermény/Gherman). At the same time, a new wave of refugees reached the Banat from the Balkans. First Serbs, then Walachians came in increasing numbers, the latter mainly settling in the mountainous part of the region. In that new situation, King Sigismund of Luxembourg had an ambivalent position to the refugees and to Eastern Christianity. On the one hand, he advocated rebaptizing the Orthodox and promoted the Observant Franciscans in Hungary; on the other hand, he generously rewarded Serbian and Wallachian lords who entered his alliance. The immigration of Serbs reached its peak after 1439, the Ottoman occupation of Smederovo.⁵ Due to that development, a complete Serbian society, with lords, *familiares* and peasants emerged in the southern counties of the Hungarian kingdom.⁶

In the same year of 1439, the Union of Florence re-establishing the unity between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Church of Constantinople was signed. The union did not prove to be effective on the long term, and we know that the Serbian despot, George Branković fervently opposed it.⁷ However, at that moment, it facilitated the integration of the newcomers. It is in that context, that one can understand why almost all the Observant Franciscan friaries were withdrawn from the region, and how the network of orthodox institutions emerged step by step. The immigration was usually spontaneous, but we know of organised relocation, as well. In the 1480s, after his raids targeting the occupied Serbian territories, the count of Temes, Paul Kinizsi settled thousands of Serbs from the southern side of the Danube into the Banat. Similarly, in 1481, the Serbian lord Dmtar (Demeter) Jakšić is said to have brought about 50,000 of his compatriots to Hungary.⁸ That is the period when the orthodox monastery of Bodrogu Vecchi was founded by Jakšić, obviously with the double purpose of representing his power and to serve the spiritual needs of the orthodox population.

The demographic transformation of the region is also reflected in the data on military capacity. In 1433, when the plan of Siena was compiled, the Bishop of Csanád was ordered to establish a *banderia* of 200 men. In 1498, the size of his troop shrunk to hundred, although – according to the tax registers of 1521 – the number of tax-paying plots did not change.⁹ It is telling that at the end of the fifteenth century, there was a difference between parts of the country, how the county troops were established. In contrast to the general 36 tenant hooves, a soldier had to be deployed after 24 tenant hooves in eleven counties of the southern part of Hungary, including the Banat.¹⁰ This means that

⁵ SZAKÁLY, Ferenc: A szerbek Magyarországon – szerbek a magyar történelemben. In: *A szerbek Magyarországon*. Ed. István Zombori. Szeged, 1991, 10–50, here: 11–12.

⁶ KRSTIĆ, Aleksandar: Familiares of the Serbian despots in and from the territory of Banat (1411–1458). In: *Politics and Society in the Central and South-Eastern Europe (13th–16th centuries)*. Ed. Zoltán Jusztin. Cluj-Napoca, 2019, 93–109.

⁷ ANDRIĆ, Stanko: Saint John Capistran and Despot George Branković: An Impossible Compromise. *Byzantinoslavica – Revue internationale des études byzantines* 74 (2016), 202–227.

⁸ PÁLFFY, Géza: *A tizenhatodik század története (History of Hungary in the Sixteenth Century)*. Budapest, 2000, 174–176.

⁹ VAJDA, Tamás: Adalékok a Dél-Alföld késő középkori demográfiájához. In: *Műhelyszemináriumi dolgozatok* I. Eds. Szilvia Kovács – Éva Révész. Szeged, 2013, 145–180.

¹⁰ Decr. 1498. art. XVI: *Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae. The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary* IV:

the economic and military capacity of the southern counties was considerable. One possible explanation for the distinction may be related to the declining income of the diocese of Csanád. Due to the provisory permission of the Union of Florence, the orthodox tenants were not obliged to pay the tithe to the bishop, who, therefore, could not equip as many soldiers as sixty-five years earlier. At the same time, the ruler could provide the expected number of troops from the area with the increased military burden. The same religious situation is reflected in the fact that very few data came to us about the mid-sixteenth century reformation in the Banat region. South from the Mureş/Maros, preachers were mentioned in the 1540s and 1550s only in Timișoara/Temesvár, Lugos/Lugos, and Caransebeș/Karánsebes.¹¹

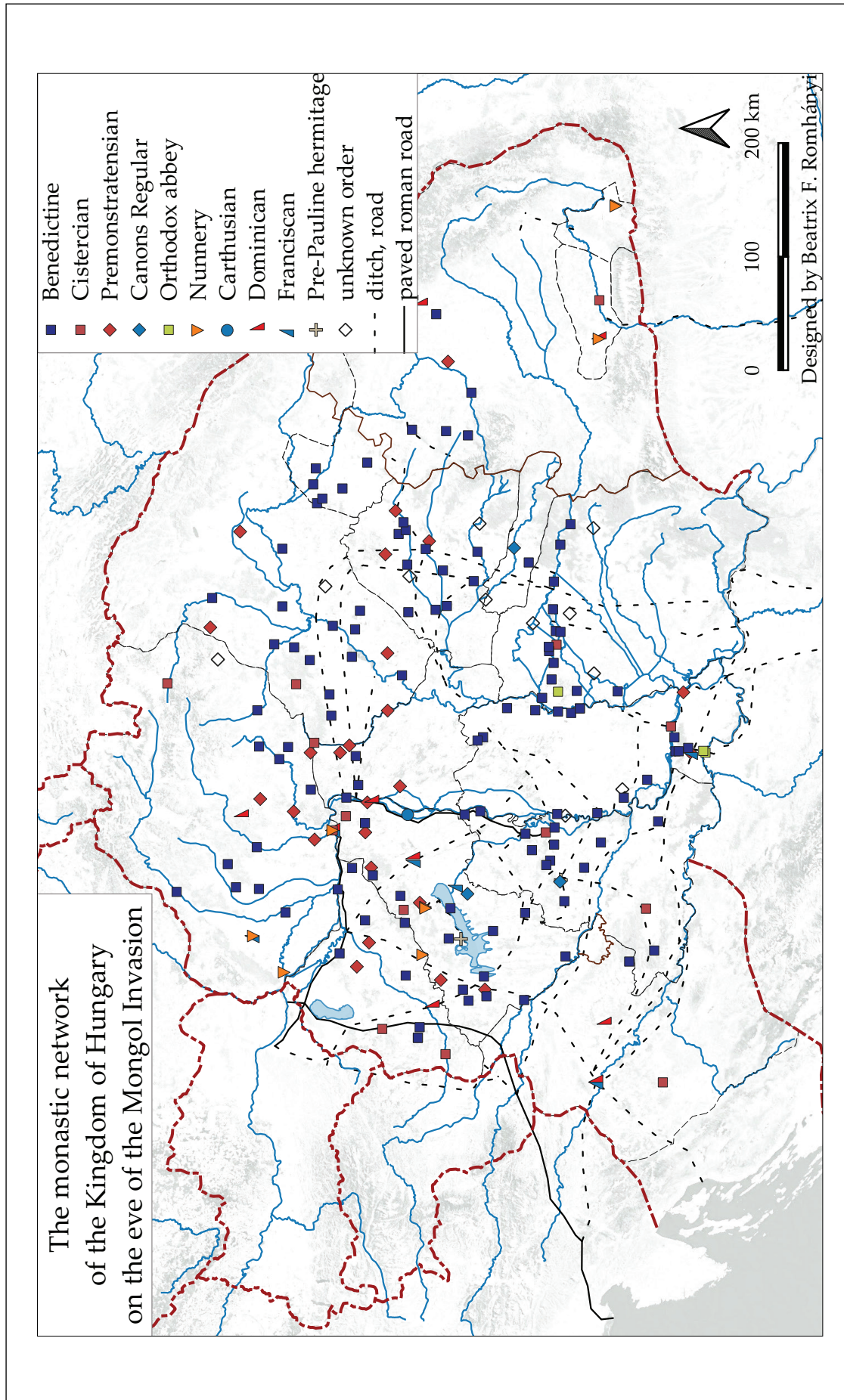
As a result of the above process, the Banat became a region with specific ethnic and religious character. (**Map 7**) After the Ottoman occupation the effects of the transformation reached even further to the north, in the region between the Criș/Körös and the Mureş/Maros, as one can judge from the data of the defterler. South Slavic population, mixed with Hungarian, was registered as early as in 1560 and 1570, and in Derekegyház an orthodox priest was also listed in 1560.¹²

To sum up, the Banat (called in Hungarian Temesköz) was one of the most unstable regions of the Carpathian Basin even before 1241, and it did not change after the Mongol Invasion either. Due to the natural circumstances, relatively large parts of the region were either very loosely inhabited, or even completely uninhabited. As for the economy, two activities seem to have dominated from the fourteenth century on, transhumance on the lowland, and mining in the mountainous part. Other agricultural productions were very poorly represented, and the number of urban centres was also very low. In addition to that, the most important town of the region, Timișoara/Temesvár became a fortress in the fifteenth century, hindering the settlements urban development. Under these circumstances, the Banat had anyhow a rather low capacity to sustain monasteries. Furthermore, intensive immigration from the Northern Balkans began from the mid-fourteenth century, especially after the Battle of Nicopolis. The recurring Ottoman raids that targeted the region from the 1390s, and the constant population movement that affected the Banat resulted in an almost complete demographic transformation. The final collapse of the Serbian state and the Union of Florence, both in 1439, increased the intensity of immigration on the one hand, and made the Catholic mission among the (originally) orthodox population unnecessary. Even if George Branković was reluctant in accepting the union with Rome, and rejected any deal with John of Capistrano, the overall attitude of the Hungarian kingdom clearly changed from the 1440s. The Observant Franciscans gradually left the region, and a few decades later new orthodox institutions emerged. This also meant the decline of the tithe-paying Catholic population, and consequently the financial setback of the Csanád Bishopric. At the end of the sixteenth century, the proportion of the Catholic or Protestant population was very low and concentrated in the urban centres (Timișoara/Temesvár, Caransebeș/Karánsebes). The intensive demographic transformation went on after the Ottoman occupation, and the immanent instability of the region's settlement network affected even the eighteenth-century re-settling of the Banat.

1490–1526. Eds. Péter Banyó – Martyn Rady – János M. Bak. Budapest, 2012, 96–98. About the comparison of the plan of Siena and the articles of the decree of 1498 see F. Romhányi, Beatrix: És ha mégis tudtak számolni? Avagy: hány katona kell az ország védelmére? In: *Hadi és más nevezetes történetek: Tanulmányok Veszprém László tiszteletére*. Ed. Katalin Mária Kincses. Budapest, 2018, 106–116.

¹¹ Zoványi, Jenő: *Magyarországi protestáns egyháztörténelmi lexikon*. Ed. Sándor Ladányi. Budapest, 1977, passim.

¹² Vass Előd: A vásárhelyi náhije 1560. évi és 1570. évi török adóösszeírása. In: *Tanulmányok Csongrád megye múltjából* IV. Ed. József Farkas. Szeged, 1980, 5–59. The orthodox priest: 51. The tax collectors did not mention any catholic/protestant priests.



Map 1: The monastic network of the Kingdom of Hungary on the eve of the Mongol Invasion