

Summary

Man and the Region of Zvolen Hollow Basin in the Middle Ages

In selecting territory we focused on Zvolen Hollow Basin markedly bounded by surrounding mountains. This territory is characterized by the same geographical conditions, which presents a backing for common starting points in the process of evaluation and partial conclusions making. In cases when sources describe territories, events and activities exceeding from the basin to adjacent mountain areas we do not strictly segregate the territory from its natural surrounding. On the contrary, in this work we mention connections between the environs and its background in the basin. We apply an extension of the spatial scale within the administrative unit of Zvolen Hollow Basin in comparison historical evidences from neighbor areas except mountain areas mainly from Pliešovce Basin and Horehronské podolie. Chronological definition of this work based on the study of written sources is defined by the period from the 13th to the 16th century. Dealing with research in older time horizon (the Early Middle Ages) we based on current status of archaeological research. The present state of knowledge of sources from the High Middle Ages and the Late Middle Ages and probably also conservation status and their composition show the absence of more numerous evidences of topography and use of the territory in the 15th century. This situation caused that we moved the upper bound of the studied time horizon to the first decades of the Early Modern Times. It is concluded by the 1570's, it is the period when written notices end in the oldest congregational protocols of Zvolen County (1506 – 1579). We suppose that numerous sources from the 16th century and their use in the process of getting information about the conditions in the region at the end of the century can partially compensate the lack of evidences from the previous periods.

Written sources from the period of reign of Andrew II. to the end of the Middle Ages record an existence of 65 settlements of different categories in Zvolen Hollow Basin. We can qualify 20 settlements, which belong to the older period of medieval settling with continuous development from the Early Middle Ages to the High Middle Ages. The size of village areas, their agricultural base, developed ownership relations, church-law relations, employment of inhabitants as well as names of locations rightfully allow us to date the beginnings of settlements before the 13th century. In several cases, so far meager archaeological findings prove the continuity on the Early Middle Aged settlements. After the Tartar (Mongol) Invasion, in case of several settlements we can think over finishing the settling process by new immigrants as well as by modification of legal status of the settlements. Except a town-formation process we can see the presence of visitors of different origin also in rural areas. Research dealing with the German settling of the region has already showed this fact. From the last decades of the 13th century we notice a dynamic process of settling of broken terrain and highland parts of Zvolen Hollow Basin. It continued with different intensity till the 15th century. Development of settling in remote areas was based on property complexes around Hronsek, Radvaň, Sásová, Poniky, Horná Mičiná and Čerín. Activities of squires on lands obtained by donations caused separation of new, mainly middle and small settling units in relatively short time periods. The process of formation of royal towns (Zvolen, Banská Bystrica, Lúbietová) and small towns (Slovenská Ľupča, Poniky, Zvolenská Slatina) was completed during the reign of Louis I. and Sigismund. This privileged

places presented at the end of the Middle Ages approximately 10% from the total number of studied locations. We think that the most important development in the process of new settling formation happened in the period from the last two decades of the 13th century till the middle of the 14th century. Spreading of settling also into highlands, what is a significant feature of Zvolen Hollow Basin, helped to finish and stabilize the settlement structure in the 15th century. Further increase of settlements was limited by residential density, from a long-term point of view this fact is proved by the fall of several locations.

Starting point for reconstruction of the environs are perambulations, descriptions of frontiers of village areas. There are together 46 perambulations in the searched region from the 13th to the 16th century. We know 27 perambulations in the 13th and the 14th century (from 1250 to 1359). On the basis of their analyses we have found out 521 evidences where objects of various kinds have a function of frontier points. So far we know about 19 perambulations from the 15th and 16th century (from 1404 to the end of 1570's). On the basis of their analyses we have found out 456 objects with a function of frontier points. From observation of this objects in both horizons (table 1) is clear that flowing and standing waters among the frontier points dropped by more than a half share. Elements of residential network made approximately 2% decrease within their share in a younger time horizon. On the contrary, the share of relief elements in the younger time horizon increased by 5%. The number of elements of road network comparing with the situation in the 13th and 14th century increased approximately by 1.5 times in the following period. Similar increase was in the case of flora in boundary area. Evaluating the structure of elements in this category it is important to mention that solitary frontier trees and bushes have a high share while forests and groves are presented less significantly. Agricultural soil increased heavily from 3% to more than 10%. In case of water systems and fords their share was balanced and minimally represented in both periods. The most significant decrease comparing of the situation in the 13th and the 14th century with the situation in the 15th and 16th century is presented by waters in the frontier area. The biggest increase (probably triple) creates the agricultural soil. In contrast with it there is an increase in the share of vegetation cover. However, its composition can be related to agricultural use of the area. In effort to generalize we can say that elements of natural environment in form of objects in the frontier area in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Times decrease. Talking about the objects, the elements of cultural country increased, but the category of residential network decreased. The introduced formulation is relative, because the problem of outcome indicators' objectification compared with each other horizons is influenced by different representation, multiplicity and details of the sources.

Except settling, territorial organization and analysis of perambulations this monograph follows particular cultivation activities, mainly the influence of the forest management and mining on the land. It also deals with the use of water courses as well as activities like fishing, hunting and agriculture. The aim of this work was to provide the most concrete answer. Its aiming to regional and local measure can reflect the horizon of knowing the majority of the society formed mainly by peasants. A different view could be provided by social groups like for example noble and townsman, who were more mobile. Attitudes of a man toward the environment represent probably the most difficult aspect of the followed issue. Available sources represent a pragmatic approach to make use of resources. There is not possible to recognize entries proving an idealized harmony of the society with the nature. In some cases the reasons of doing are

explained by social and legal rules. For example, a mention about blinding of a serf caught in hunting in the forest don't shows an intention to protect the nature, but a strong attempt to enforce monopoly of landowners on hunting. Delimitation of ownership right together with difficulty of obtaining subsistence explains the strict sanctions and frequent arguments among the owner of the land. Utilitarianism of today's society approaches this understanding, although its origin mustn't go into the Middle Ages.

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