

Dissertation Abstract

**Naming and History:
Personal Names in the First Part
of the Angevin Age**

by

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The topic and the objective of the dissertation

1. The dissertation deals with the personal names of the historical period specified in the title, a period on which linguists have not done thorough research so far. Hungarian historians and linguists have long aspired to collect and process the historical personal names. These names provide numerous disciplines with essential data: apart from onomastics, the history of language, the history of orthography, historical dialectology, and the history of literature, cultural history, ethnology, genealogy, regional history and the history of settlements often exploit this significant group of data. However, the reliable processing and the evaluation of the data are not possible without the joint help of the above mentioned disciplines.

It follows from the subject that the dissertation heavily relies on the literature of historical linguistics, genealogy, social history and the history of settlements apart from the documents from the 14th century used as source material. Collecting the names is not the objective of the dissertation, but merely its method; apart from the presentation of the data the dissertation primarily intends to highlight the reasons of certain phenomena. On the basis of the corpus the dissertation thoroughly discusses the territorial, temporal and social distributions of the names, the interrelationship between the royal family originating from Naples and the names of the Hungarians, naming based on literary works, the connection between saint cults and giving personal names, the connections between the basic forms of names and their allonyms, the evolution of family names (with special emphasis on the relations of the tradition of Latin documents and social mobility with the use of names, and on the influences on the history of culture) etc.

2. The name collections available (e.g. "Collection of Names from the Age of the Árpáds" by KATALIN FEHÉRTÓI) have usually exploited the documentary material of the age of the Árpáds. Although JOLÁN BERRÁR'S book "Hungarian Female Names up to 1400" (1952) and general works treating female names use sources from the 14th century, they did so merely by necessity: earlier documents contain very few female names. Thus, while the names from the first three centuries of our statehood have been collected and processed on the basis of various criteria by several researchers, the 14th century and the subsequent centuries have been neglected. If researchers chose to discuss this period, they always focussed on a specific viewpoint (e.g. "Hungarian Distinguishing Names from the 14th Century" by KATALIN FEHÉRTÓI, 1969) or on various regions ("The Personal Names of the Serfs of a 14th-

century Large Estate” by KATALIN FEHÉRTÓI, 1968; “Serf Names from the Várdai Estates in the Middle of the 15th Century” by ANDRÁS MEZŐ, 1970).

It is obvious that for the history of language the names from the age of the Árpáds are usually of ultimate importance, since they represent the earliest data for specific names (except for some foreign sources predating the foundation of the state), and they are particularly valuable also from the viewpoint of etymology. Besides, this is the only period the written source material of which one can process and evaluate in its entirety and can have access to almost completely in print. Starting from the age of the Angevins much more sources are available. On the one hand, however, these are less significant due to their large quantity and their being relatively “late”, and on the other, a researcher could not have an overall view of even the already published material.

Nevertheless, processing the names from the age of the Angevins is essential for linguists and historians, since it is this corpus that could provide researchers with most valuable information about the contemporary transition from names of one element to names of two elements, about the pace of the process transforming the rich and varied corpus of Hungarian names into a more homogeneous set, about the spreading of the ecclesiastical names at the expense of the secular names and about the latter’s geographical and social implications and background.

3. Due to the large number of the documents, narrowing down the sources to be used was essential. Two possibilities emerged: either temporal or territorial restriction of the sources. The restriction of the research to a single region or county did not prove to be applicable, since it would have resulted in omitting the evaluation of the territorial distribution of the names. Thus, the corpus of approximately 15 000 data comprises names only from the first half of the Angevin age, i.e. from the reign of King Charles Robert (1301–1342). The analysis, however, touches on both the late Árpád age and the age of Louis the Great, and even on the naming practices of the subsequent centuries on the basis of the existing collections and the literature.

The main source of the dissertation is the first four volumes of the “Collection of Documents from the Age of the Angevins” (ed. by IMRE NAGY, 1878–1884) containing the material of the period in question, since it comprises data from the whole area of historical Hungary. There is only one source offering more up-to-date and more abundant material: the ongoing series “Collection of Charters from the Age of the Angevins”, but this collection publishes only regesta for the most part, it does not contain all of the names, and it presents the

ecclesiastical names in modern transcription. Thus, the latter collection is obviously less suitable for researches of onomastics and historical linguistics than the former one. Apart from the “Collection of Documents from the Age of the Angevins”, data – although comparatively less in number – were obtained from two further collections: from the materials related to the subject period in the “Collection of Domestic Documents” and in the private collections of two families (Károlyi and Héderváry). Since the works mentioned present incorrect readings at times, their indexes of names are defective and they often equate otherwise unrelated names incorrectly, during the material collection process I always checked the suspicious data in the National Archives of Hungary and naturally I corrected the incorrect forms.

Although the research report intends to cover the names of the whole of the Angevin society, the nature of the sources does not make it possible: no census of the whole population was taken in the Angevin age, thus the names of the serfs and the peasants are preserved in comparatively smaller number than those of the noblemen. Consequently, the corpus has been conveniently completed with the register of papal tithes from 1332–1337, which contains – with the exception of two dioceses – the names of all contemporary ecclesiastical persons in Hungary, thus also those of the lower clergy of inferior social status and with the material of several unpublished documents from the market towns in the Tokay district.¹

The structure of the dissertation

1. The first part of the dissertation briefly outlines the results and the significance of the research on historical personal names carried out so far. It intends to reveal the researchers’ motivations and objectives, the roots of the scholarly interest in these names, the trends and methods of the research and its relations to other disciplines and fields. Some of the approaches and methods used in the dissertation have already been applied (e.g. genealogy, history of possession), but there are some which – often due to the novelty of the related disciplines and paradigms – have been discovered by the experts of onomastics only recently or have not been discovered at all yet (e.g. the enriching influence of pragmatics or cognitive semantics).

¹ DL 57232 (1303), DL 76235 (1315), DL 76337 (1324), DL 76452 (1332), DL 76478 (1334), DL 76494 (1334), DL 4164 (1336), DL 76553 (1337), DL 76584 (1338), DL 76627 (1341), DL 76664 (1342), DL 76678 (1342); (DL = Diplomatikai Levéltár, i.e. Diplomatic Archives, National Archives of Hungary). I owe thanks to LÁSZLÓ SZABOLCS GULYÁS for placing the documents listed above at my disposal.

2. The second part presents the objectives and methods of the dissertation, the territorial and temporal limits of the data collection, its sources and viewpoints, and then the difficulties of establishing a corpus are discussed in details (lack and abundance of data, inaccuracies, forging). This is followed by the steps and methods of the data processing, obstacles and possibilities in identifying the name bearers together with their social status, age, family relationships and location.

Since the related literature is considerably colourful regarding its terminology, a separate subchapter is dedicated to the discussion of the terms used in the dissertation (individual name, distinguishing element, family name, name structure).

3. The third part of the dissertation deals with the individual names (names which result from the separation of circumscriptions, distinguishing elements or family names). Before the numeral evaluation of the data methodological questions are discussed, since identifying origin of the names and deciding whether two name forms are related or not constitute a task for researchers which requires careful consideration and offers several possible solutions at the same time. The solution to the problems presented in this chapter has a fundamental impact on the results of the data processing (e.g. classifying names into different categories on the basis of their origin).

In the numerical evaluation of the corpus the dissertation presents the most characteristic individual names of each social stratum, region and period and the origin-based proportions of the male and female names in each region and in each shorter temporal unit established within the period under research. Particular attention is paid to the changes in the proportions of the names of Hungarian and of foreign origins and to the geographical and social diffusions of each (origin-based) category with continuous comments on the conditions in the Árpád age and in the subsequent periods presented by the literature.

The overview of the data is followed by the outline of the allonyms occurring in the corpus. The dissertation discusses how they had evolved, how their load and diversity had changed compared to the age of the Árpáds, and how significant these changes had proven to be with regards to the subsequent periods and name types.

The last chapter of the third part deals with the trends and practices in giving individual names and with the motivations of the naming in the Middle Ages. Out of these subjects, the influences of the saint cults flourishing in the first part of the 14th century (the cults of the three Hungarian saint kings, Saint Erzsébet, Blessed Margit, Saint György, Saint Demeter etc.) on naming, the interrelationship of the naming practices in the royal family and those

among the Hungarians and naming motivated by the popular tales of chivalry (Tristan and Iseult, the Arthurian legend cycle, the novels about Alexander the Great and about the fall of Troy) are discussed in more details. This is followed by the outline of dynastic and clan naming practices (e.g. naming with the intention to honour somebody, inheriting names, the appearance of the clan name as individual name, names characteristic of certain clans or families).

4. The last part of the dissertation discusses the evolution of family names. Firstly, an outline about the causes of the evolution of family names is given and the temporal frames of this process are indicated, and then the methodological questions which naturally emerge in evaluating the 14th-century name structures are discussed in details. The description of the main types of the distinguishing elements is followed by the presentation of linguistic and extra-linguistic criteria with the help of which circumscriptions, distinguishing elements and family names can be clearly separated in most of the cases. Among these, two criteria are in focus: the applicability of place names containing personal names in the research on the history of place names, and the role of the number of the personal names in identifying the type of the distinguishing elements and in separating distinguishing elements from family names. As theoretical background, this chapter considerably exploits the principles of cognitive linguistics, but the crossing of approaches is carefully avoided.

In processing the name structures the dissertation firstly examines the influence of the 14th-century practice of document writing on the evolution of family names. In the analysis pragmatic approaches dominate: the number, type and order of the distinguishing elements occurring in a single name structure considerably depend on the rank of the issuer of the document, its beneficiaries and other persons mentioned in it, on the class of society they belong to and on the image they want to communicate about themselves. The communicative situation and the context similarly affect the name structure: it is telling whether name bearers had the main role or only a supporting role in the document and whether they are mentioned individually or together with their relatives. The characteristics of the text – particularly the co-reference relations – also determine in what cases, how many and what type of distinguishing elements are attached to the individual names. Furthermore, the sex of the name bearer also influences the name structure, thus this part discusses separately the name structures denoting women, the differences between the name structures of the two sexes and the historical and social roots of these differences.

Since name structures denoting the same person might alternate even within a single document, it is not possible to carry out the same type of quantitative research in the case of the distinguishing elements as with the personal names. One can only observe the social distribution of the one-element names and the names with *dictus*: these observations provide a basis in the dissertation to draw conclusions about the time of the evolution of family names and about the pace of their spreading.

5. A collection of names is attached to the dissertation in a separate volume. Its preface contains the principles of compiling this corpus (e.g. unity of name and person, i.e. connecting different name structures denoting the same person in a common subsection, as close identification of the name bearers as possible, joining the different basic name forms which belong to a single name unit), the structure of a single name entry and the system of references used.

Results

1. On the basis of the corpus, one can observe that the most frequent male and female individual names of the period were the same in all social strata, regions and temporal units. The most popular male names are *János, Miklós, Péter, István, Pál, László* etc., while the most frequently used female names are *Erzsébet, Margit, Katalin, Ilona, Anna* etc. One can rarely find names of non-Greek or non-Latin origin among the first 15-20 names. For instance, such names were *Henrik* among the commoners, *Beke* in certain regions, or *Csala* and *Sebe* in the female population in almost all social strata.

According to the evidence offered by the temporal distribution of names, the set of names had significantly narrowed down by the 14th century, and, parallel to this process, the overload of the most popular names had increased rapidly. While in the age of the Árpáds the proportion of even the most overloaded ecclesiastical name did not reach 4% (HAJDÚ 2003: 360), by the period discussed in the present dissertation the overload of the first name had already exceeded 8%, and – in certain social strata – even 10%. The following chart illustrates the pace with which the overload increased in the name material of the secular landowners:

Position	1st period (1313–1342)			2nd period (1283–1312)			3rd period (1253–1282)		
	name	number	%	name	number	%	name	number	%
1.	<i>János</i>	427	13.50	<i>Miklós</i>	227	8.53	<i>János</i>	40	5.27
2.	<i>Miklós</i>	352	11.13	<i>János</i>	219	8.23	<i>Miklós</i>	36	4.75
3.	<i>Péter</i>	261	8.25	<i>Péter</i>	181	6.80	<i>Péter</i>	34	4.49
4.	<i>István</i>	201	6.35	<i>István</i>	126	4.74	<i>István</i>	33	4.35
5.	<i>László</i>	162	5.12	<i>Pál</i>	116	4.36	<i>Pál</i>	32	4.22
6.	<i>Pál</i>	153	4.84	<i>Mihály</i>	97	3.65	<i>Jakab</i>	22	2.90
7.	<i>András</i>	139	4.39	<i>László</i>	89	3.34	<i>András</i>	18	2.37
8.	<i>Mihály</i>	119	3.76	<i>Tamás</i>	84	3.16	<i>Dénes</i>	16	2.11
9.	<i>Jakab</i>	112	3.54	<i>András, Jakab</i>	82	3.08	<i>Simon</i>	14	1.85
10.	<i>Tamás</i>	104	3.29	<i>Lőrinc</i>	60	2.25	<i>Benedek, Gergely, György</i>	13	1.72
11.	<i>Domokos</i>	88	2.78	<i>Domokos</i>	58	2.18	<i>László, Lőrinc, Sándor</i>	12	1.58
12.	<i>Lőrinc</i>	77	2.43	<i>Benedek</i>	55	2.07	<i>Márton, Tamás</i>	11	1.45
13.	<i>Gergely</i>	56	1.77	<i>Gergely</i>	50	1.88	<i>Mihály</i>	10	1.32
14.	<i>György</i>	51	1.61	<i>György</i>	34	1.28	<i>Domokos</i>	7	0.92
15.	<i>Demeter</i>	40	1.26	<i>Márton</i>	32	1.20	<i>Imre</i>	5	0.66
All names		3164	100.00		2661	100.00		758	100.00

1.1. The investigation in the distribution of male names according to their origin has revealed that the names of Hungarian origin had already been pushed in the background before the 13th century, since these were represented with a proportion of less than 9% in the name material of the landowners in the 14th century. Although the proportion of name items had hardly become less, their overload had decreased significantly, while that of the names of Greek or Latin origin had increased rapidly: their proportion had already exceeded 60% by this time and increased to almost 88% by the beginning of the 14th century. I was not able to study the temporal distribution of the name material in the lower classes of society due to the unevenness of the corpus. However, according to the data gathered about the lower clergy coming from lower social strata in the 14th century, the names of Greek or Latin origin had become dominant also among them by this period (92%!).

1.2. Approximately the same applies to the female names. The small number of data restricts the possibility of studying the changes in time, although it is clear that the names of Greek or Latin origin had constituted 60-70% of the set of names by the 14th century.

1.3. The examination of the territorial distribution of male names has revealed that characteristic trends in names cannot be identified in any of the regions.² There are no significant differences between the regions regarding the distribution according to the origin of the names; no direct connection can be recognized between the ethnic characteristics of a given

² The size of the corpus did not make the examination of the territorial distribution of the female names possible.

region and the origin of the names found there. The reason for this is that the landowners generally came from Hungarian or Magyarized families. Besides, trends in naming are not connected to ethnic characteristics. Furthermore, among landowners honorific naming was characteristic, thus the inheritance of a name given to a prominent member of a family or clan could preserve a name of Hungarian, Turkish, and German or Slavic origin through centuries. (It is again due to this fact that the proportion of names of Greek or Latin origin is slightly lower among the landowners than in the lower classes of society.)

1.4. Narrowing down of the name set implied a decrease in the number of allonyms, an increased prominence of some variants and a loss of popularity or even the disappearance of others. Shorter, one- or two-syllable names (e.g. *Jan, Dom*) had been replaced by longer ones (*Mikocha, Potouch*), individual derivatives (see *Denk, Pos*) had been pushed in the background by derivative clusters (see *Benke, Posa*).

2. This homogeneity is to be attributed mainly to the characteristics of the ecclesiastical naming practices, in it – opposed to the secular naming practices – the meaning of the name is not significant, the name does not characterize, it merely identifies. This factor in itself rules out several possibilities, furthermore, name givers can only choose from a limited set, thus the recurrence of certain names becomes highly possible. After the disappearance of the descriptive characterising function, other motivations had started to prevail. Among these, the most significant one in the period discussed was homage: people tended to honour a saint, an ancestor or a close or distant relative through giving their names. The purpose of the name givers with this choice (beside the obvious intention of commemoration) must have been to influence the life of the child – in accordance with the ancient name magic: they intended to provide the child with a patron saint or a positive example. Moreover, one cannot neglect the effect of fashion, although it seems that this had a much less significant role compared to the dominance of the ecclesiastical names. Apart from what has been mentioned above, politics also influenced the name giving practices in the royal family; to some extent, the same applies to the clans and to the baron families.

2.1. Out of saint cults, the cults of the three Hungarian saint kings (István, László and Imre) – and among them particularly the cult of László – had the most significant influence on the name giving practices in the 14th century. One can observe in Table 1 shown above how rapidly this name makes headway on the list of the most popular names from one period to another. The name *László* had become particularly popular with the landowners, and concerning its territorial distribution its influence is most dominant in the proximity of Várad, which

is regarded as the centre of the king's cult. This phenomenon is obviously connected to the royal support of the cult, since King Charles Robert – following the traditions of his dynasty – laid special emphasis on fostering and promoting the cults of the family saints. Family saints could increase the international prestige of certain dynasties, besides, they provided the first Hungarian Angevin with a powerful means of legitimacy, as the king endeavoured to support his rightful claim to the throne also through stressing his family relations to saints. This is the reason why the names *Erzsébet* and *Margit* were frequently used among women, although these two names – and particularly the latter one – were popular in the whole of Europe in the period. Since the era in question is the last flourishing period of the Hungarian culture of chivalry, it is straightforward that – apart from Saint László – other chivalric saints (e.g. Demeter, György, Jakab, Mihály) also exerted significant influence on male names.

2.2. Name giving practices originating from literary works are also connected to the courtly chivalric culture: from the end of the 12th century to the beginning of the 15th century the names of characters in different tales of chivalry (e.g. *Trisztán*, *Izolda*, *Artúr*, *Lancelot*, *Hektór*, *Ehellős*, *Ulixes*, *Olimpiás*) constantly appear in the name set. This name giving practice flourished from the middle of the 13th century to the first part of the 14th century, although due to the inheritance of names they tend to reappear until the beginning of the 15th century. Their appearance proves that the stories of the Breton cycle, the novels about the fall of Troy and Alexander the Great were known in the era, at least among the courtiers. According to the data these names also appeared among the members of the lower classes of society, although this does not prove necessarily that the literary works mentioned were widely known, it rather reflects that these names had already become fashionable. As their frequency shows, however, these names did not become as popular as the names of ecclesiastical origin. The names *Sándor*, *Fülöp* and *Ilona* seem to be exceptions, although their popularity is to be attributed rather to the saint cults behind them than to their literary origin.

3. The decrease in the set of individual names is inherently connected to the evolution of family names, and not only in the sense SZARVAS (1885: 418), KUBINYI (1885: 179), KARÁCSONYI (1900/2004²: 12) and ERDÉLYI (1932: 3–6) supposed, i.e. too many identical names were confusing (since, apart from this, one must take other factors into consideration, as well), but also regarding the way they evolved. Although the closed set of ecclesiastical names excluded the meaning from name giving, this method of naming returned in the distinguishing name elements, it is not by chance that the motivations of the distinguishing names are the same as those of the secular names. (After the establishment of the family names nam-

ing creativity lost a further domain, but this was characteristically compensated for the appearance of another element, the byname.)

The evolution of family names was a long process comprising several phases. The first phase was the appearance of the circumscriptio; in the next phase the different types of the distinguishing name elements evolved from these. These elements were connected to the individual names in a prescribed grammatical relation and less occasionally than the circumscriptio, although they did not become stable. One can easily observe this process by comparing data referring to the same person: the distinguishing name elements often combined with each other, as well, and several different factors already mentioned in the presentation of the sources influenced the construction of the name structures. The first sign of the establishment is the constant appearance of the same distinguishing element next to the individual name of a person; and this is followed by the last phase of the establishment when it becomes hereditary. Its illustration is only possible through the comparison of several data referring to the same person. Although the major part of my corpus is suitable for comparisons of this kind, since several persons appear more than once in the documents containing the names of secular people, with the exception of the name of the Drugeths of French origin I managed to identify family names unquestionably only in five cases (or in seven cases together with the uncertain data). This suggests that the last phase in the establishment of the family names already started at the beginning of the 14th century, but these cases remained isolated and sporadic.

The analysis of the social distribution of the names containing *dictus* and that of the one-element names has revealed that there is no significant difference between the various social strata regarding the time of the evolution of family names: although the use of the distinguishing name elements originated in the upper classes and spread downwards, it became general in the whole of the society soon. This is to be attributed to the necessity of distinguishing and exactness, although one should always take also fashion into consideration. This was advantageous for the landowners as it could secure inheritance and it was again to the advantage of the supreme power since it could help to keep an exact record of the taxpayers. All these factors contributed to the spreading of the distinguishing name elements.

4. Several open questions have remained during the processing of the data. Among these, the most fundamental question is to what extent the name structures found reflect the real, colloquial use of names and to what extent they mirror writing practices. Naturally, this question cannot be answered for certain. During the analysis of the name structures it has become evident that the names appearing in the Latin text are rather the products of the official

written language and they are far from the name forms used in everyday communication. However, the variants of individual names (e.g. *Peteu*, *Gyan*) deviating from the Latin equivalent of the basic form of the name and certain types of the distinguishing name elements (e.g. names containing *dictus* and place names joined with *dictus de*) illustrate that the colloquial use of names had an effect on the official literacy.

Since the time limits of the corpus do not permit the observation of how family names had appeared in large numbers, in the future it would be necessary to expand the time limits of the collection at least to the second half of the 14th century. From this era we have a much smaller number of data, while several analyses have been produced about the 15th century, thus the expansion of the time limits would establish the continuity between data collections and analyses covering the periods ending with the 14th century and starting with the 15th century, although territorial continuity would not be complete in this case. The name corpus of this period could be extremely useful in detecting the assumed simplification of the name structures, the disappearance of the additional Latin elements and the ultimate phase in the establishment of family names.

The social and geographical limits of the corpus can also be expanded: we can increase the number of names by involving new sources about less recorded regions and classes of society. In this way, we could widen our knowledge about the set of individual names and names characteristic of certain regions and social strata.

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