

HISTORY AND DEMOGRAPHY IN THE  
OTTOMAN BANAT – REALITIES AND HYPOTHESES  
(Summary)

The book „A Temesvari és Moldovai szandzsák törökkori települései (1554-1579), Szeged, 1996, - „The settlements from the Turkish reign in the sandjaks Timișoara and Moldova”, Szeged, 1996 – written by Engel Pál, brings into scientific discussion a thorough analysis of the communities conscriptions existing between 1554-1579. These conscriptions offer extremely interesting data regarding the Banat sites and districts (the Turkish nahi) in the first decades of the Timișoara vilaiet (run by a pasha). The book offers valuable information on the sites size,

by pointing out the number of taxation units – hané (houses, gates, households) – from each village. The conscriptions show us which of those sites were considered towns and which of them – villages.

The present paper develops the analysis of the data offered by Engel Páls book by the structural continuity between the old ante-Ottoman districts and the Ottomans ‘nahias’. It also comments upon the demographical situation of some old communities situated in the Timis plain and near the old road Timișoara – Varshetz – Danube, pointing out the existing towns and the deserted villages from this area.

The phenomenon of abandoning of the villages which was noticed during the Ottoman conquest is mostly due to the uncertainty of daily life caused by frequent warrior Turkish expeditions in Banat. The percentage of villages ‘abandoning’ seems to be bigger in the case of the villages from the Banat plain than in those situated on the Faget hills.

Since the perspective of the historical long duration should be present in a historical – demographical research, the author of this paper brings to light essential data about the history of the presented communities from the time they appear in the medieval sources (13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> centuries) up to the beginning of the modern age (18<sup>th</sup> century). The paper also contains notifications and descriptions of some Banat communities found in journey diaries made by Evlia Celebi, Sándor Pál, Maxim the Serb Patriarch of Ipek – 17<sup>th</sup> century travellers in the Banat county. All these data throw light on the existing knowledge about the people and communities from the Ottoman Banat area.