On the Track of the Szekler Village *Tízes*
The Model-Like Potential of the Szekler Village *Tízes* on the Eve of the 21st Century

Tünde AMBRUS
Sapientia Transylvanian Hungarian University
e-mail: tundea@gamma.ttk.pte.hu

Abstract. The object of this study is the existence of the village *tízes* (organization in structures by ten) as space-specific elements in Szeklerland and the social problems at the turn of the centuries (involving the population, the community, the culture, and the economy). The study is the result of a historical-geographical survey of the cultural space in Szeklerland within a larger research. The main purpose is to make an attempt to form a historical, system-based perspective, make people aware of the material and spiritual value of the Szekler *tízes* as well as contribute to the subsistence of the *tízes* and the reinterpretation of the notion of value in the 21st century, using my own means and modalities. The subsistence of the Szekler village *tízes* is not required by the subsistence or restoration of the romantic, spiritual goods or the community organization but by the necessities of the entire community.

Keywords: Szekler village *tízes*, the *szeg*, the organization of the settlement and the community

1. Introduction/Topic

My last study and conference – as the genesis of the formation of the *tízes* is still not clear – was concluded by the following sentence (to comfort myself):

> The formation and accurate reconstruction of the Szekler village *tízes* may remain an eternal mystery to us, but the purpose of the present study is not to solve the problem of the formation of the *tízes* but to point at what the *tízes* means to us today, to realize the value and magnificence of history and time, to recognize the settlement-organizing pragmatism based on wisdom, the complex and organic model whose norms were matured by our ancestors using a systematic thinking during the centuries and whose viability was secured by the walkable path.

I have been urged to conduct further research since then, and I have been concerned with the question of whether this conclusion, which suggests some kind of resignation, can permanently be drawn. As a conclusion of this line of thoughts, I decided to make a new step on the border of general settlement history, geography of population, and dynamic cultural geography, stipulating that in this specific interdisciplinarity it is not practical to 'measure everything' as the self-conscience, the voluntary and emotional vibrations, the heritage, the identity, the faith, and the genius loci cannot be quantified, but their effects are significant. Thus, I tried to uncover, re-examine, and put in a reconstructed light, without any prejudice and with plenty of curiosity, a big part of the material which had been published in my studies concerning the space-specific Szekler village *tízes* (Ambrus 2012: 247, 2014: 89) and add my new research results and evaluations. All the people who were dealing with the history, settlement history, and military organization of the Szeklers as well as those who evidently mentioned the *tízes* and contributed with new pieces of knowledge are also present in the study (Orbán 1869–1871; Szabó–Szádeczky 1895, 1927: 7–252; Szádeczky 1927: 286–293, 1915: 4–6, 17–20, 1902: 24–47; Bartalis 1933: 6–8, 124–158; Kring 1934; Endes 1938: 5–238; Milleker 1939: 4–9; László–László 2005: 128–137; Benkő 1853; Bierbauer 1942, 1986; Györffy 1973: 57–64, 1990: 5–43, 1995: 37–41; Imreh 1973, 1983: 7–271; Tarisznyás 1982: 5–87; Garda 1994: 3–98, 2001, 2002; Köpeczi 1993; Vámszer 1977, 2000; Zayzon 1997: 1–5; Kállay 1829; Egyed 1981: 191–244, 1999: 5–58, 1997: 358–367, 2009, 2016: 348–369; Sófalvi 2003: 16–34, 2006: 5–26; Bárth 2007; Botár 2008).

In my research, I have constantly been concerned with the question of how the strength of the community, which dictates the individual what to do in a given situation, is born and what makes it live. This strength represents much more than what the written, but mostly unwritten, laws of the village ossify in the memory of the individual with their centurial proof. How did he recognize that in a given time a given territory can be defended from the intimidation of state socialism and the illusions of the development of our age with the strength of the community? The Szekler village *tízes* represents the essential answer to this question: the strength of the community is, at the same time, the wisdom of the people, and it is not only the – sometimes rigid – regulator of the economic and social life but a consequent and security-offering morality and a 'helping hand' in fighting the difficulties of life. In this context, the object of the present work represents the existence of the Szekler village *tízes* as space-specific elements, the strength of the community which originates in it, and the diverse problems of the 21st century (connected to communities, culture, religion, population, economy, and politics). The last directive raises further actual questions. Why are the existing communities falling apart? Why are the Szeklers alienated? Why do they want to emigrate in great numbers? Why is the imitation of the other cultures and the aspiration to be different gaining more and more space? Where is the receptibility, predisposition to

the common good? Where is the common sense? Why does the man of today think that the world began with him, and it will end with him? Why are the generations in conflict with each other and why are they not connected to ensure the viability of the responsible community? Why are we not present where we should be present and where we are present, we are there without full commitment? Mainly, why can we not recognize that the strength of local communities can compensate, in our days as well, the central will and intimidation, which produce conflicts?

The present work contributes to the completion of the already uncovered pieces of knowledge: it is the interpretation, on the level of the entire community, of the space and the community. This interpretation was born within the cultural landscape examination of Szeklerland, in the field of historical geography, as part of a larger research. Actually, while I am putting the Szekler village *tízes* on the balance of the organically developing models which grow from the base, I am trying to prove, rethink, and preserve in the 21st century and draw the attention to the value-bearing character and complexity of a space and age spirit and paradigm. It is of utmost importance to get to know and let other people know the systems of relations which formed the Szekler society, which had a specific structure, a separate jurisdiction and distribution of tasks, and which worked, in many cases, with a quite wide autonomy. As a conclusion, I can summarize – using the cause and effect logic – the main purposes of the research focused on the value-bearing character of the *tízes* in the following points:

– to prove that:
   – we can form an accurate image of the history of a group of people not only through certified data, records, and artefacts of archaeological excavations but the whole picture must also be revealed through the perspective and in the context of the community and the system,
   – the world of the *tízes* organized and developed an order which constituted the basis of the relationship between people and the development of the smaller–larger communities,
   – there is a *genius loci* in the world of the *tízes* – the spirit of the place, the atmosphere –, which constitutes the basis of thinking and action,
   – the self-preservation in the different periods of life is the result of a different learning process,
   – the future of a given territory is ensured by the community strength of those who live in it;

– to contribute to making people and communities aware of the spiritual and material values of the Szekler organization of communities and thus to their subsistence;

– to give the opportunity to the young generations to get to know the system perspective of their ancestors and the present of their *tízes* heritage, which stretches towards the future;

– to contribute to the reinterpretation, in the 21st century, of the value awareness, according to which the strength of the real community strengthens a person in his/her essence;

– to make people aware of the fact that the life of a person living in a real community is made richer by the very fact that s/he lives in a community;

– to make people aware of the fact that smaller communities can do more for each other;

– to suggest that going back to the value-bearing norms of the *tízes* does not mean a regression;

– to contribute, as some sort of auxiliary or background science, to the complex work of settlement development or leading an institution;

– the leaders of different settlements or institutions (administrative, cultural, or ecclesiastic) should realize that there lies an enormous strength in the real communities, but it takes a hard and consequent work to establish these communities, keep them alive, and ensure their healthy functioning;

– the Hungarian population of the Carpathian Basin as well as the whole Europe can recognize (in the political situation caused by migration on the eve of the 21st century) the continuity in the life of the Christian communities, pluralism, the importance of togetherness and social diversity.

With this study, using my own methods and means, I am trying to strengthen our self-knowledge, which constantly requires growth, our sense of where we belong, our faith, and indirectly our sense of identity because these make communities really successful.

2. Research Methodology

In order to be able to analyse and evaluate the processes and phenomena which are deeply embedded in the Hungarian historical sciences but which have not received the well-deserved attention yet, on the basis of information taken from the largest circle possible and the principle of triangulation (Babbie 2000), we applied several – primary and secondary – methods.

During the primary research, I used mental mapping and the connected questionnaire survey from the quantitative and qualitative information gathering methods, which are actually based on the common research of geographers and psychologists: psychologists offer the research methods, while geographers bring the geographical topic. The procedure colligates the cognitive and spiritual abilities which allow us to gather information from the spatial environment and to analyse and interpret the processes which have led to the formation of the spatial attitude (Downs 1970 qtd by Cséfalvay 1989, Lakotár 2006: 7–13, Gál 2006: 201–210). The work carried out so far proves that, by applying these procedures, historical

sciences (in this case, historical geography and history) can integrate the results of other sciences (anthropology, economy, social psychology, sociology, etc.).

Through the observation on the field and the interviews made with the locals, I searched connections between the real facts. I visited the old people who were raised mostly in the *tízes* culture. I asked questions related to the existing and supposed system of the settlement parts with a historical and diachronic purpose. I used the received data to interpret and evaluate the geographical space.

The secondary research involved the investigation and processing of the historical, ethnological, and linguistic specialized writings of Szeklerland (mentioned above). The source material was the first and most important methodological tool for me as this exposed the interpretation problems of the notion, the formation, and the development of the *tízes.* I completed the investigation of the specialized literature with the investigation of maps and the examination of the village morphology.

3. Research Results

According to the methods I used, I present the results and evaluations of the complex cultural landscape examination, which was performed within historical geography, grouped in four categories, from six perspectives:
   – the review of the subject basis of the research:
      – the meaning of the *tízes* lexeme,
      – the historical background of the Szekler *tízes*;
   – the village *tízes* in the focus of settlement geography:
      – when the *tízes*, the *szeg* give value to the region;
   – the village *tízes* reflected by mental maps:
      – the methodology of empirical research,
      – the analysis and evaluation of the data of the mental maps referring to space; the way the interviewed see their village;
   – when the given space and time gives the opportunity to recognize the strength of the community:
      – the inner organization of the *tízes* and the *szeg.*

4. Discussion

4.1. The Review of the Subject Basis of the Research

4.1.1. The Meaning of the Tízes Lexeme

When we want to define *tízes* as a common noun, we have more possibilities. In Szekler dialect, it means part of a village, but it does not only refer to the place where the given part of the village lies, but it involves the objects, processes, and phenomena which are connected to this place. The *tízes* as a concept of settlement geography can be interpreted as the smallest unit or the administrative unit of the organization of the Szekler society. Moreover, it can also be defined as a basic unit of the organization of the community and economy.

The words *szeg* and *szer* can be considered its synonyms. There is a method (*szer*) in organizing the order (*rend* = order, *szer* = method, *rendszer* = system), in healing (*gyógy* = healing, *gyógyszer* = medicine). The prefixes *al-* (lower), *fel-* (upper), and *közép-* (middle) reflect the spatial relations. They reflect the way the individual uses the space. If the surface rises, then he uses *fel-* (up, upper), if it descends, then the given part of the settlement is given the prefix *al-* (down, lower). The area situated between these two is evidently called *Középtíz/ Középszeg* (the *tízes,* the *szeg* situated in the middle).

In time, new forms of denomination have appeared. The names given according to different families, nationalities (*Cigónia-*, *Olászer* – the *szer* populated by people of Gypsy and Romanian origin), leading families (Ambrusok szege: the *szeg* of the Ambrus, Sándor szeg: the *szeg* of the Sándor), nicknames (Gyehenna: the *szer* of Gehenna, Izraeliták szere: the *szer* of the Israelites), humour (Poklonfalva: the *szer* of Hell, Bolha szer: the *szer* of Fleas, Pottyond: the *szer* of Flop), trades (Bíró szeg: the *szeg* of the Judge, Pap szeg: the *szeg* of the Priest, Kovács szeg: the *szeg* of the Blacksmith), physical characteristics and qualities (Sánta szer: the *szeg* of the Limping, Szőke szer: the *szer* of the Blond), or natural characteristics (Rezalja: Under the Copper, Vízeleje: the *szeg* of the Well-Spring, Vízmejéke: the *szeg* of the Waterfront, Tószer: the *szeg* of the Lake, Felfalu: the *szeg* of the Upper Village, Oltelve: the *szeg* of the Olt River, Kotormány: the *szeg* of the Pile). There are also parts of villages named with Arab numbers (Három tízes: the *tízes* Three; Első, Második tízes: The First and Second *tízes*) or Roman numbers (Ditró: I–VI. Tízes: the *Tízes* I-VI) and parts of villages which have an inexplicable name, of unclear origin (Csáburdé, Doboly, Bakmáj, Bedecs, etc.).

These geographical names were not created by science or politics. People perceived, in the given cases, the variety of types of relief, the division according to different families and nationalities or the characteristics of the landscape based on their humour and gave the names of the parts of villages accordingly.

The linguists believe that we can find false *tízes* names and the proliferation of *tízes* names in the above-mentioned nomenclature (Csomortáni 1997: 344–350).

4.1.2. The Historical Background of the Szekler Village *Tízes*

When we make inquiries about the topic of the *tízes*, we encounter three universal questions: where, how, and when.

We can answer the most easily and shortly to the question of *where*. Although the *tízes* were born in the space structure of Szeklerland, there are some other settlements in the Carpathian Basin (for example, Kolozsvár, Eger, Debrecen, Szombathely, Sopron, etc.) where the local people formed their own spatial and territorial division, inner administration, and social organization based on the decimal system. These were called *tized* (Bárth 2007, Petercsák 2016). However, in the course of history, the *tized* division started to fade, and the quarter division started to prevail. In the regions of the Carpathian Basin where the *gyepű* were formed, in many places, the traces of this specific settlement structure – which was suitable for the military technique of the age – may be detected. In his works, Györffy (1973: 57–64, 1990: 5–43, 1995: 37–41) emphasizes that the *tízes* organization counts as an ancient oriental lowland plain institution, which was preserved by the military order. King Saint Stephen renewed and expanded it probably because he recognized the fact that the *tízes* form of organization was not unknown in the Christian European states either. Thus, in the age of the establishment of the Hungarian state, the organization in *tízes* and százas (in units of one hundred) was compatible with the organizational traditions in units of ten and one hundred of the European states, which were built on the ashes of the Roman Empire. That is why traces of division in *tízes* and *tized* could be found by Györffy (1926) in Hajdúböszörmény and Hajdúszoboszló, by Milleker (1939: 4–9) in Kecskemét, by Zoltai (1939) in Debrecen, by Csizmadia (1942, 1983) in the cities beyond the Danube (Győr, Szombathely, Kőszeg), by K. Kós (1979: 471–478) in Szék, and by Bárth (1984, 1986, 2002, 2007) in Kecel, Kalocsa, Gyulafehérvár, and Kolozsvár. In addition, the *tized* also had a role in the administration of settlements which were formed in the 18th and 19th centuries. Thus, the question is given: if there was such a system within the Carpathian Basin, if they realized the pragmatism, the viability, the value-bearing character of the organization in *tízes*, the strength of the community and the role of the laws and organizing principles, which were formulated by the given communities, in the relationship between people and nature and between each other, then what role did the Szekler *tízes* have in it as a viable, model-like settlement organization?

We are still answering the question of *where* when we look closely at the spatial structure of the inter-Carpathian basins in Szeklerland, and we find out that today's villages which were formed from the *tízes*, *szeg,* and *szer* are mainly

situated on the edge of the basins and on the sole of the valleys, that is to say, where the streams enter the basin. This could not have happened differently in the 13th century either. They had to settle down on the edge of the inter-Carpathian basins, where the rivers Olt, Maros, and Küküllő and their tributaries exited the valley, in order to dissolve the contrast between free view and hiding, while they had to find food as well – so, the natural endowments had to be optimal. This starting point is also valid if we examine the *tízes* from the perspective of the interaction of the natural endowments and social functions (the protection of the borders, farming, and the organization of communities). Living in the age when Europe abandoned its Christianity, we have to place our conceptual definitions on the subject basis provided by the historical past and the headway of viability.

When answering the question of *how*, we have to take into consideration two organizing principles, the natural endowments and the historical reality, because our ancestors developed their settlements and today's settlement parts according to the necessary defence dictated by the conquest of the land and the natural endowments.

It is well-known that the conquest of the country began at the end of the 9th century. The conquering Hungarians settled in the compact regions of the Carpathian Basin, which lay out of the sphere of the great powers of the age and did not belong to any unitary state. After the settlement in the newly conquered regions, the Hungarians who arrived in the Carpathian Basin built their system of defence, which had different strategical concepts based on *gyepűk/gyepűkapuk* ('vulnerable' points) and *gyepűelve* (natural defence line) based on the variety of forms of relief, their morphological elements, and their natural borders. The starting point of the organization of both the strategy and the tactics was the existence of the natural-geographical conditions in the given geographical space. They realized that the defence of the territory had to be in perfect harmony with the natural endowments because these defined the practical or impractical character of the artificial system of defence. Thus, the natural line of defence provided by the Carpathians had a prominent role in the elaboration of the defence strategy. On the plains, the wetlands and the swamps, while on the mountainous regions the various morphological forms (mountains, valleys, and narrows) provided the opportunity for military use.

The reliable community and organization of the Szeklers, which had a very important military role at the time, could have made Prince Árpád sign the treaty of adherence (Egyed 1997: 358–367, 2009, 2016: 348–369). A compact landscape is given; there is a reliable group of people who were born to be soldiers and who could handle weapons well. Thus, the quarters of the Szeklers were placed on the most endangered edges of the land in order to protect the newly conquered territory; they were settled in the most vulnerable points. They received the task of guardians. With the pact made at the moment of the adherence, the Szeklers could skip the phase of servitude. The tax of the Szeklers was paid with guarding and fighting.

As the front of the conquerors was oriented towards the West, they developed the first guardian settlements at the western, northern, and south-western vulnerable gates. They fortified the hills following the valleys (Danube, Pinka, Zala, Kerka, and Drau rivers) with gradually advanced outposts along all their lengths. Two significant guardian settlements were formed at the westernmost border: the first one in the micro-region which belongs to the Szalai Gate and the valley of the middle part of the Kerka (Lower-*Őrség*; *Őrség* – guardian settlements), while the second one in the valley of the Pinka (Upper-*Őrség*). Further two groups defended the Mosoni Gate in the north-west and the line of the Drau in the south-west (*Figure 1*).

In the 21st century, the attacks of the eastern nomadic peoples (the Cumanians and the Pechenegs) became more and more frequent; so, some Szeklers were settled down at the western part of historical Transylvania and later in South-Transylvania to protect the southern borderline. The people who assumed the defence reached their final territory of settlement, today's Szeklerland, starting from the middle of the 12th century (Köpeczi 1993, Kánya 2003: 27–65, Bereznay 2011: 77–83) (*Figure 1*). This historical event explains the fact that we can find the specific settlement structure, morphology, and settlement names of the western border region (Őrség, Göcsej) in the easternmost *gyepű* gate, which is Szeklerland (Ambrus–Csapó 2007: 43–49).
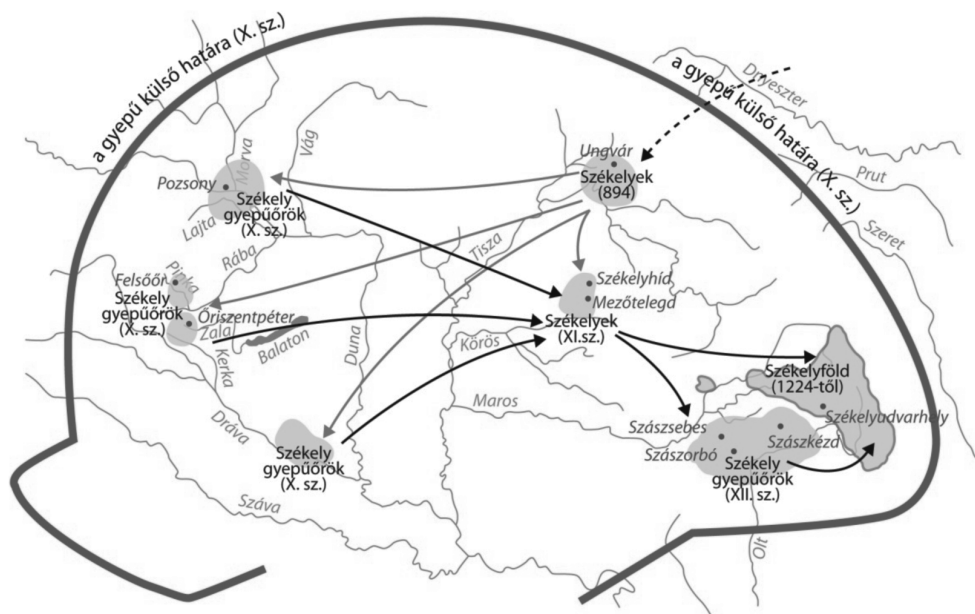
Source: Kánya 2003: 28, ed. by Ambrus 2010: 37

Figure 1. *The scheme of the Szeklers' settlement in the Carpathian Basin*

They did not need to build a continuous, artificially fortified defence line towards the mountains like at the western borders. There they obstructed the paths to the valleys, and they formed observation posts and lurking-places in the region of the sources (Fodor 1936: 113–144). Therefore, the military task took priority when they settled down or located the Szeklers. They had to form the settlements in unity but grouped in space. They had to adapt to nature, by all means, when they planned their future. They realized that the perfect source of wisdom is nature itself. Nature implicitly dictated the order, but it needed a wise organizer.

Presumably, they settled down (or located) in the form required by the military lifestyle, the smallest military unit, the *tízes*, and later they defined their own direction of development as they were looking for higher dimensions of their existence (economic, religious, and cultural). During the centuries, the organic system of the *tízes/szeg* defined the lifestyle and life quality of the inhabitants of the settlements. The *tízes/szeg* acted as an integrative power – it organically unified its inhabitants on the level of the community. This little autonomous form of organization became the bearer of rights and responsibilities.

The answer to the question of *when* is much more difficult to give. Today, it is still difficult to give an exact answer to that question in the absence of certified historical data, which could be our source. That is probably why since the last century until our days several historical and ethnological specialized works just mention the *tízes* when they write about the Szeklers. However, the researchers must have felt the weight of it falling into oblivion.

Most of the famous specialists (Orbán 1869–1871; Szabó–Szádeczky 1895, 1927: 7–252; Szádeczky 1927: 286–293, 1915: 4–6, 17–20, 1902: 24–47; Bartalis 1933: 6–8, 124–158; Kring 1934; Endes 1938: 5–238; Milleker 1939: 4–9; László–László 2005: 128–137; Benkő 1853; Bierbauer 1942, 1986; Györffy 1973: 57–64, 1990: 5–43, 1995: 37–41; Imreh 1973, 1983: 7–271; Tarisznyás 1982: 5–87; Garda 1994: 3–98, 2001, 2002; Köpeczi 1993; Vámszer 1977, 2000; Zayzon 1997: 1–5; Kállay 1829; Egyed 1981: 191–244, 1999: 5–58, 1997: 358–367, 2009, 2016: 348–69) connect the *tízes* to the remnants of the military organization from the age of the settlement of the Hungarians. They interpret the development of the later social and economic *tízes* structures as a system. However, ethnologist János Bárth changes the direction set by the work of the above-mentioned researchers, and he is backed up in his views by the archaeologist of Szeklerland (Botár 2009). They create a new horizon as far as the genesis of the *tízes* is concerned. János Bárth refers to the absence of the oldest written relics when he affirms that it was not the accommodation to the military organization that created the *tízes* but the practicality and need of organizing the growing community in the 17th century, which was revived and kept alive by the power structures in the modern age.

According to my point of view as a settlement geographer, the formation and development of the settlements reflect the occupation of the inhabitants (in this

case, defence); so, the military duties took priority in the age of the settlement (resettlement) of the Szeklers. As a conclusion, the existence of the military organization of the Szekler *tízes* cannot be overlooked if we search the conditions of the formation of the settlements.
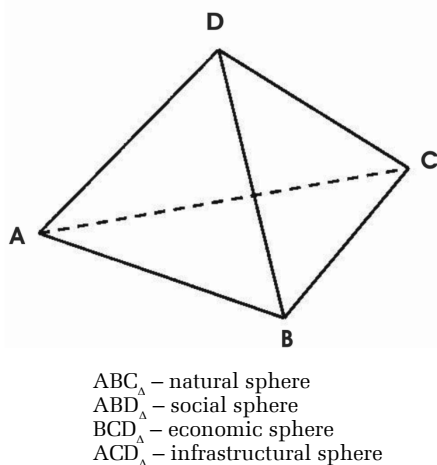
> Moreover, it would be strange now, in the 21st century, to see that the people who assumed the duty of protecting the borders, who preserved the best their spatial [sic!] and territorial division, inner administration, social organization and archaic language organized according to the Hungarian grammatical structures, could change them where there was no need for it because it was not required by the rational peasant mind or the 'high demographic increase' (Ambrus 2012: 247)

Although the birth rate was relatively high, the deaths, the epidemics, the Tartar and Turkish invasions considerably decimated the population. I think that there was not a bigger need for organization in the later centuries of the Middle-Ages than in the time when the attacks of eastern nomadic people had to be parried. At the same time, I support those thinkers who believe that we cannot draw an accurate historical picture only on the basis of written data.

4.2. The Szekler Village *Tízes* in the Focus of Settlement Geography

The settlement is the object of many sciences (geography, sociology, ethnology, anthropology, demography, statistics, law, administration, etc.), but it is not uncommon in the everyday language usage either. The representatives of these sciences are trying to embed it in their own conceptual toolbar and find principles until the phenomena and processes examined by the given discipline become predominant and the aspects of the given science dictate the essence of the definition. At the junction of these sciences, the settlement can be regarded as the 'nucleus of the whole society' (Tóth 1998: 389–393). These nuclei are situated very far from each other, others partly or entirely fuse, but apart from the given distance – provided that the outer powers cannot loosen them – the togetherness, the sense of identity or otherness are obvious. According to the classic phrasing of Tibor Mendöl, the settlement is a spatial unity of the dwelling and working place of a group of people (Mendöl 1963: 12–31). Of course, we understand that the definition is out-of-date at the point that we cannot speak about the unity of the dwelling and working place in many cases today. The spatial function ceases to exist at the moment when these two functions are performed in different settlements. Recognizing the untenable nature of the definition of Mendöl, the revision was successfully carried out by Pál Beluszki and József Tóth (Beluszki 1995: 12–36, Tóth 1998: 389–393); namely, Pál Beluszki speaks about the functional unity instead of the spatial unity.

In today's geography, the concept of geographical space has become a systematizing, synthetizing category of the natural environment and the society. In order to perform the theoretical construction, we have to use the factors which define the space as tools of the analysis. We can use the tetrahedron-model (*Figure 2*) conceived by József Tóth as a guideline in the interpretation of the geographical space. This model pictures well the complex character of space.

ABC$_\Delta$ – natural sphere
ABD$_\Delta$ – social sphere
BCD$_\Delta$ – economic sphere
ACD$_\Delta$ – infrastructural sphere

Source: Tóth 1998: 389–393

Figure 2. *The tetrahedron model of the settlement*

The tetrahedron model helps us to look at (or transmit) space as the cooperating system of social, economic, infrastructural, and natural spheres, as each sphere interacts with the other three along the edges. That is to say, the tetrahedron model is expressive also because the alteration in the weight of a factor from inside the system also affects the weight of the other three factors. Thus, it expresses the interdependence of the enumerated four factors (nature, society, economy, and infrastructure) and the fact that if there is an intervention, the geographical space reacts systematically. For example, when a settlement is depopulated, this alteration appears immediately in the economic and infrastructural sphere, but nature also dictates another order.

4.2.1. When the Tízes and the Szeg Add Value to the Landscape

The landscape as a functional system involves the settlement. The settlement is an organic system, a specific ecosystem which combines the characteristics of the natural systems (geological, meteorological, hydrological, botanical, pedological, and the relief) with the characteristics of the human systems (social, economic, and technological). The material and proportion of the artificial and

living elements differentiate the settlements from each other and from the natural systems (Hajnal 2006, 2010). With the help of the tetrahedron model referring to settlements as conceived by József Tóth – being aware of the changed historical background –, I consider that the *tízes* and the *szeg* are today cultural formations of capital where the social, economic, and technological spheres, which play part in the structure of the space, constitute an organic part of the culture, but their physical foundations and the conditions of development are defined by the natural environment and its resources.

At the beginning of the 21st century, when we want to define the ancient, specific structure and spatial organization of the villages of Szeklerland as geographers, as researchers, we find out that it is an impossible endeavour. On the one hand, methodological descriptions were not made and mapping work has not been done for many centuries or has not survived because of the vicissitudes of history. On the other hand, the social and technological structures of the last century/centuries (infrastructural development) and the consequences of the demographic growth reorganized the spatial expansion of the once separate villages, *tízes* and *szeg*. In most of the settlements, the *tízes* and the *szeg* have partly or completely coalesced by now. However, there is a standing-ground because we recognize in the space, in a smaller proportion, the net of the remote, separate village parts, which remind us of their original state. These relics represent the decisive phases of the genesis of the landscape and define the basic structure of the space even in our days. They reflect the process of the formation, the development, the coalescence and the organization into an autonomous settlement of the village *tízes* and *szeg*. They deserve to be taken into consideration with regard to the whole society.

We can mention the *tízes* of Csíkmindszent and Csíkszentlélek (*Figure 3*), which were formed through deforestation as typical examples of the spatial conservation of the *tízes*. The two settlements of today attest the traces of the archaic settlement order, the historical process which occurred in the structure of the space and the formation of the landscape. They settled down in the space in unity although separated in space, in groups belonging to different families.

The separate *tízes* of Csíkmindszent and Csíkszentlélek are territorial forms of specific units, which organize the society in our days as well. If we study them, we can understand, to a great extent, the formation of the settlement network, settlement structure, and settlement morphology of Szeklerland. The *tízes* are situated 100–500 metres from each other and are composed of 20–80 houses or families. They probably had a looser structure in the past, but the fathers split a building plot to their sons from their own parcels. The parts of the settlement are separated from each other as little villages (*Figure 3*). This dispersion makes the locals jocularly say: Mindszent (All Saints) – 'there everybody/everything is saint here and there'.
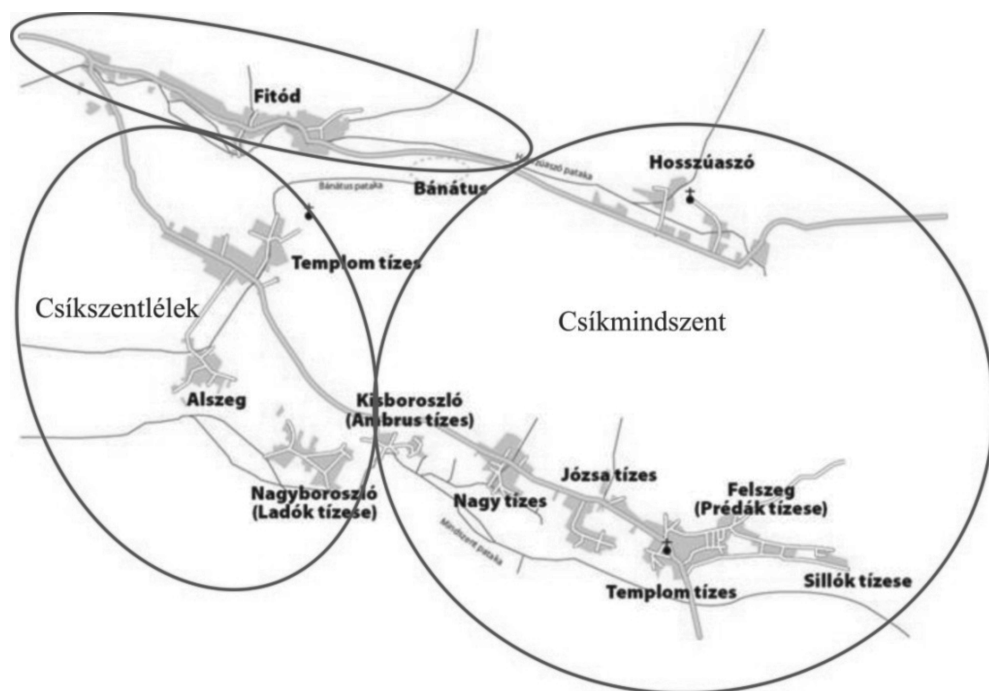
Source: Rákossy 2005: 10–11; based on the illustrated county atlas – 2005, ed. by Ambrus, 2012

Figure 3. *The tízes of Csíkmindszent és Csíkszentlélek today*

In our days, out of the ten *tízes* of Csíkmindszent, three *tízes* (*Prédák*, *Templom*, and *Józsa*) have coalesced (*Figure 3*). Since the end of the 19th century, since the driveway was built on the slopes of the hills, the inhabitants of the *tízes* have been building their houses along the new road. We can find this tendency primarily in the *tízes* of *Nagy*, *Józsa*, *Templom*, *Kisboroszló*, and *Fitód*. Every *tízes* is composed of a few streets.

If we look at these relics with the imagination of a vivid settlement researcher, it is not difficult to recognize that the order of the settlement was grouped in administrative units, according to the needs and requirements of the later ages. That is to say, the *tízes*, which are actually separate in space even in our days, are enumerated along with the closest settlement parts in spite of the fact that they were separately working, viable social formations themselves.

The adverse natural conditions (the bad quality of the plough-land, its limited expansion, the lack of rivers or streams, and isolation) caused the slow growth and the conservation in a more primitive stage of the village *tízes* and *szeg*, or, in some cases, the depopulation, the atrophy, or disappearance of certain village parts. On the other hand, the favourable conditions (the opportunity for economic and infrastructural development or demographic growth) resulted in

spatial growth, expansion, or coalescence (*Figure 4*). The village parts which were articulated with plough-land, pasture-land, and mountains formed a unitary settlement block, and the distance between them diminished with the growth of the built-up area. The village types of various morphology, with an organization by *tízes*, *szeg* or *szer*, were formed according to the endowments of the space (*Figure 4*). Endes (1938: 5–238) sums up this specific phase of the settlement-historical development as follows: 'The *tízes* became villages in time and the *tízes* became their *tízes*...'

Figure 4. *Partly or completely coalesced settlement parts in Csíkszentdomokos, Kászonok, Csíkszentgyörgy, Csíkszentmárton, Csíkszentmiklós, and Csíkdánfalva*

4.3. The Village Tízes Reflected by Mental Maps

4.3.1. The Purpose and Methodology of the Empirical Research

The present empirical research focuses on finding out how stable the Szekler village *tízes*, the Szekler *tízes* community proved to be despite the gradual changes in the different juridical institutions, which were dictated by history, and to what extent the unique 'solutions' of history – the settlement parts of today – are reflected in people's minds (Cséfalvay 1990: 145–165). I performed the survey in the villages of Csíkszék and Kászonszék – 11 villages in total.

When I formulated the hypotheses, I relied on the historical specialized literature of the chosen topic and on the structural interviews conducted on the field. Thus, as a thinker who assumes functionality, I formulated the hypotheses in a way that makes the verification of my conceptions referring to the characteristics of the local society possible.

The starting hypotheses of the mental mapping are:

– the essence of the *tízes* and the *szeg* have not disappeared in the conscience of the inhabitants of the examined settlements;

– the inhabitants possess an accurate knowledge of the places, they are familiar with the geographical position of the *tízes*, and they can accurately name them;

     – they are familiar with the multitude of daily used cross-roads;

     – the sacral relics and buildings, which bear the religious messages expressing the spatial possession of the *tízes*, are very important to them;

     – the ancient centres (junctions) of the *tízes* fell into oblivion;

– their maps certify the specific organization of the village of today, which was formed from the *tízes*;

– it can serve locality, togetherness and can make the sense of identity stronger.

The list of tasks connected to mental mapping is composed of two parts: the actual mapping and complementary questions. In the case of the actual mapping, the interviewed people had to draw the map of their village in a blank 17 x 16 cm square from memory, without using any tools. The complementary questions focused on references of content, which contributed to the continuity of the 'discussion' and, through their controlling role, to the exploration of consciousness and the gathering of conscious elements.

The knowledge connected to space (the processing of placement, shape, extension, rupture lines, and borders) was carried out essentially in the head, with the help of the first military survey (1769–1773) as well as the collation of the maps received from the Rákossy (2005: 10–11) Illustrated County atlas and the National Cadastral and Real Estate Registration Agency (Agenția Națională de Cadastru şi Publicitate Imobiliară). I did not use any computer programs because these are not as flexible in the redaction as the processing of the mental maps would require. The data which could be processed with traditional statistical procedures were processed with the SPSS 7.5 for Windows computer program.

When I analysed the information-bearers referring to space, it was important to take into account the fact that the mapping work relies on measurable data which refer to space and which are considered to be objective while the graphical editor of the mental map relies on its perception of the space. In this study, I present the received results through the example of seven mental maps (*figures 5–6*).

4.3.2. The Way the Interviewed People See Their Village.
The Analysis and Evaluation of the Data Referring
to the Space of the Mental Maps

On the one hand, for the individuals, the space has a symbolic significance which frames and defines the mentality, faith, and behaviour of the locals, the all-time functioning of the community, the rules of access to the resources. On the other hand, it strengthens their sense of belonging, which constantly needs to be augmented, their self-knowledge, and, indirectly, their sense of identity, the basis of which is historical reality. An adequate behaviour and mentality as well as a specific lifestyle which suits the natural and social structures is connected to this reality, the conscious reminiscences of which are carried in their way of thinking. This principle is certified by the results of the mental mapping which was performed among the local inhabitants.

During the analysis of the mental maps, I realized that the placement, shape, extension, and proportion of the mental spaces rarely correspond with the specialized cartographic work (*Figure 5*). Everybody has a mental map onto which the spaces of the everyday activities are carved and which contains detailed (familiar) and blurred places reflected by the level of elaboration of the images because living in a space can redraw the physical characteristics and the real image of the given place. So the distortions are not the results of some unintentional mistakes, but they reflect the way the individual uses the space.
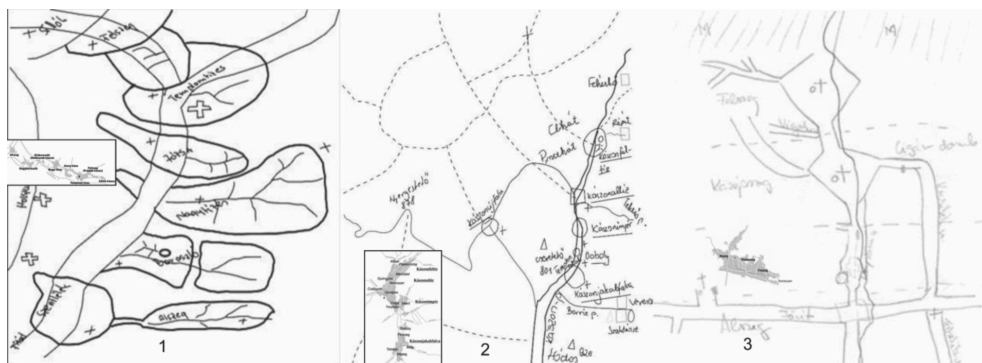
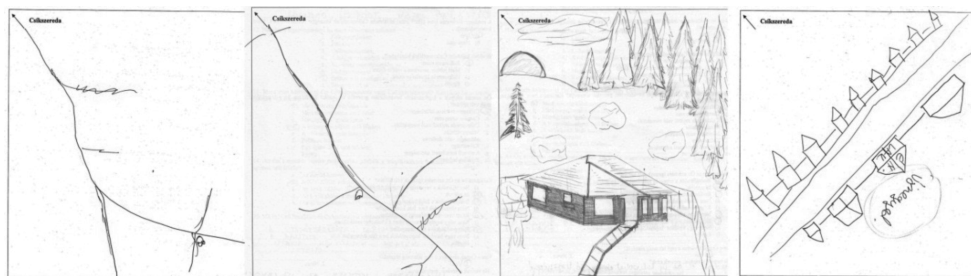*Source: ed. by Ambrus, 2010 – based on the survey carried out among the local inhabitants*
Figure 5. *The way the inhabitants of Csíkmindszent, Kászon, and Csíkszentmiklós see their village*

On the basis of the information-bearers of the above presented three mental maps, we can state that Szeklerland, with its space-forming elements, can be classified in the group of regions with a high level of uniqueness, as they represent well the phases of development of the *tízes* (conservation, partial coalescence, complete

coalescence), and they still leave their mark on the basic structure of the region as well as the knowledge and view of space of the people. So, the essence of the *tízes* did not disappear in the group of the inhabitants of the examined settlements. The three drawings represent the mental maps of three old inhabitants, and they reflect well the division in *tízes*. We can state that the *tízes* communities define the structure, morphology, and organization of the settlements. They have a defining role in the settlement parts, the routes, and the neighbourhood relations. It is remarkable that the inhabitants separate *tízes* and *szeg* with clear lines, even in places where they have already coalesced, signalling and documenting their sense of identity belonging to different *tízes* (*Figure 5*).

An important element of the samples is the stream (*Figure 5*). On 40% of the drawings, we can 'read' the watercourses which cross the village. This proves that water is a significant settlement-organizing element in the conscience of the interviewed people as there is no life without water. It is well-known that the eastern Szeklers always tried to build their houses and stay close to the indispensable watercourse because of the characteristics of the relief.

The religious objects on the field have an important role in the conscience of the authors of these maps as the representations of the symbols of the sacral relics (crosses, crucifixes) get a prominent place, often at the centre of the *tízes* (*Figure 5*). These crosses, or, as the locals call them, crucifixes, can be regarded as the symbols of the possession of a community over the space. The nodes, or centres are situated at the point where more roads meet and the unbuilt space widens. They can be identified on several drawings. As the *tízes* and the *szeg* have already coalesced, nowadays, people do not use the nodes as centres, but they just travel, walk across them. That is why they can be outlined with more difficulty, they can only be defined as the intersections of roads. However, the field objects (wooden crosses) signal that they represent important mental spaces to them.

Source: ed. by Ambrus 2015 – based on the mental maps of the survey with questionnaires

Figure 6. *The way the newly-settled inhabitants of Csíkszentlélek and Csíkmindszent see their home settlement*

The specialized literature connected to mental maps (Lynch 1979: 537–558; Cséfalvai 1990, 1994, 1989; Letenyei 2006: 147–185; Lokatár 2006: 147–185) agrees on the fact that a geographical space becomes cognitive in the moment when it gets a name. We can think about a given space only by referring to the name of the mental space. The research certifies with data the fact that the names of the *tízes* and the streets have a much more determining role in forming the maps 'living in the heads' for those people who have roots in the settlement than for those who have recently moved there, mostly from Csíkszereda (*figures 5–6*).

The drawings of the newly-settled are much more modest (*Figure 6*). 28.57% of the interviewed did not even make a drawing. Very frequently, the streets appear without names (*Figure 6*). The lines are unclear, they often make corrections and use searching lines. The contour of the *tízes* appears on none of the drawings, although this could represent the starting point (*Figure 6*). The so-called 'my own house' strongly emerges from the elements of the iconic maps with a considerable size, at the centre and highlighted. It is remarkable that the participants in the survey illustrate only the village part or fragments of the village part where they live. We can read from these drawings the representation, the introduction as an attraction (*Figure 6*). The analyst may have the feeling that these authors think that Csíkszentlélek, on a smaller scale, and the whole world, on a larger scale, began with them.

It cannot be incidental that the village part that was formed in the last two decades as the consequence of disurbanization is not called, by analogy, New *tízes* but 'New quarter' (*Figure 6*). This fact leads us to the world of negative prejudice.

4.4. When the Given Space or Time Offers the Opportunity to Recognize the Strength of the Community

The *tízes* and the *szeg* stand apart from the other settlements of the Carpathian Basin and beyond not only through their structure, morphology, landscape-forming power, historicity, and nomenclature but also through the fact that their inhabitants recognized the strength of the community, which was necessary for the efficient defence and the possibility for a later inner social-economic-cultural organization.

It is possible that the presence of the Szeklers in the Carpathian Basin has to be divided into two parts: before the need for defence and after it. Assuming the defence of the border meant an opportunity for them, as well, to survive, they had to realize at that very moment, in that specific location that strategy based on systems of the Hungarian kings was not just an opportunity but also an occasion for creating their own home and changing their lifestyle they had led until then. After the settlement of the Hungarians in their homeland, the Szekler mission

itself, the defence of the borders 'placed these people on their places'. In case of emergencies, they had to be more 'creative' and stick together. Those who did not stick together were doomed. Those who did not pay attention and were not receptive had to learn at their own expense. They had to figure out on their own what they had to do. If there had been no order until then, assuming the duty of defence made them create order, they had to see help or, in today's expression, partner in the fellow-being within the community. The alliance of every person was sacred. They had to stick together to be able to organize; otherwise, the enemy would have swept them away. They knew that it would be a sign of weakness if they had not performed the assumed duties assigned to them.

The reassuring strength was born within the community. The thoughts, the words, and the actions had to be in harmony. They realized that they are responsible for their fellow-beings. Thus, they arrived at the necessity of the process and phenomenon of 'collective soldiering' (Egyed 1997: 358–366, 2016: 348–369), which meant a burden at the level of both the community and the individuals. In the course of the defence, they learned that they could not turn back life, they had to pay attention to each other and to what and how they acted. They had to draw conclusions from their own successes or failures. The roots of crisis could always be found in a mistake in thinking, in mentality. The mentality which was based on the community, the perseverance, and the faith made them capable of recovering from the difficulties of defence.

Although the word 'community' has a bad status in our days because its real meaning and its practical usage got separated in the political development of the recent past and became a false tool taken from the property-room of an already disappeared world, the concept was preserved to express the once existing but still desired human relationship. I call 'community' the human coexistence whose norms are formed and applied by the community itself and where the interest, the system of values, and the conscience are common. We can regard a given group of human existence as a real community if several of the enumerated factors predominate there, and they are present in the life of the individual with as great an intensity as possible.

They recognized the essence of the strength of the community later, on which they based their economy, their religious and cultural life, even their law-making system, the respect of the law and the punishment of the malfeasance (of course, they would not have been real Szeklers if there had been no arguments, malfeasances, or even lawsuits). The inhabitants of the Szekler village *tízes* and *szeg* weathered the storm formed around the defensive duty and transformed it into a protecting, economic, spiritual, and mental system of values and into nourishment. That is to say, the community of the *tízes* transferred the strength of the community and the efficiency in organization, which was the creation of the military technique, to the fields of cultural and economic life and faith. As

a result, the organization of the defence, the need for discipline, regulation, and subsistence created social, economic, and cultural communities, organizational units. They had enough faith, perseverance, and diligence to recover from any bad event that happened to them.

They were convinced that the order always had a method (*szer*) of being applied, and the order, the organization always led to tranquillity, imperturbation, and peace. They did not study personalistic philosophy, but they interpreted the person not in itself but through his relations with other people. They were aware of the personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, we, you, and they) and the relationship between them. They were not preoccupied with how something could not be carried out. They did not look for excuses, they acted and worked, searched solutions, and created useful, beautiful, pleasant, and valuable things. If they tripped and fell, they could stand up. They organized their community life with elementary power. However, these communities were formed from within, as the results of an organic development. They were not regulated, controlled, midwifed, and nursed by executive bodies from the county, by Bucharest or Brussels, proving their superiority.

We have to realize that the strategies, projects, and applications created in the 21st century and this period loaded with chemicals and stimulants cannot replace the strength of the community. The crises and absurdities of today also originate in the faults in thinking and the alienation of the selfish individuals. The path that we have been walking on since the change of the political regime is very narrow, and there is an abyss on both of its sides. However, if we are optimistic, we can come to the reasonable conclusion that sinking is the price of rising.

It is easy to say now that, given the historical situation, the revelation, the alliance of the people, and the reasonable action, which, adapted to the given situation, were quite natural things, but they recognized the essence of this 'strength' also in the course of later difficulties and joys.

As a partial conclusion, we can state that thinking and acting in a community are the results of a learning process. The individual is born – in a normal case – in a family. The first learning mechanisms reach him there. However, the cousinship leads him towards a greater community, and this is completed with the local society and the natural residential community. I call these communities (family, relatives, *tízes*, and *szeg*) the learning scenes of the primary communities. But I consider that the religious, nursery school, and school communities also belong here. Ultimately, the human existence is continuously situated in a social field, but the individual's quality of life is significantly influenced by the first learning scenes of the primary communities.

4.4.1. The Inner Organization of the Tízes and the Szeg

The Szekler village *tízes* can be considered as remarkable scenes of the primary communities, where the receptive individual could lay the foundation of his basic human character and models. The communities thought and acted according to a long-term ethical process of subsistence. They kept in mind the point where this delicate balance could be realized. In these organizations of the communities, we can discover the vision of viability and the actual functions of the community: socialization, mutual support, economic prosperity, and social control. I will try to prove this with examples of community organizations listed in this chapter and explain it with community-forming factors.

The *tízes*, as a social unit, meant a group of households. Although it was divided into smaller groups by spheres related to economy, religion, cousinship, and proximity, it was mainly the *tízes* and the *szeg* that colligated the families, which were farming separately and had separate housekeeping and religious beliefs, into an organic organizational framework which functioned as a unit, as a community. New organizations were formed within the *tízes*, which appeared on the field of economic activities, culture, or practising religion. These community organizations which were based on the common interest, system of values, and conscience can be regarded as the common social capital of the Szeklers. They helped them survive and evolve.

The community organizations identified in the examined field, in the course of the empirical research, are presented in *Table 1*, grouped in five categories. The next subsection focuses only on the communities connected to getting water, as I wished to present the answers to the formulated questions and the findings in correspondence, according to the associative logic.

**Table 1.** *Community organizations in the examined settlements*

LN	Factors which influence the inner community organization	Community organizations
1.	Communities which are connected to the life-giving water	fountain communities
		spring communities
		livestock-watering communities
		water-conduit communities
		bridge communities
2.	Communities which are connected to practising religion	rosary associations
		church choir communities
		the community of wooden crosses or crucifixes of the *tízes*
		the community of tinklers and mass-houses

LN	Factors which influence the inner community organization	Community organizations
3.	Communities connected to culture (in the proper sense)	the community of customs and traditions connected to the turning-points in people's lives
		the community of dance groups
		architecture, as the common cause of the community
4.	Communities connected to farming	sheepfold associations
		commonage associations
		voluntary, cooperative work
		hemp-steeping communities
5.	Morphogenetic and surface-morphological cultural landscape elements, connected to economic structures as increments of the creativity of the community	the community of the *muzsda*
		the community of border mounds

Source: surveys performed in the period of 2006–2016; ed. by Ambrus, 2017

The inner organizations were not only formed but were maintained and kept alive with ethical rules from generation to generation, throughout the centuries. This fact made me wonder when I got to the supplementary list of questions connected to mental mapping: 'What formed and maintained the communities?'

The interviewed people consider that religion is a determining factor among the elements of content of the cognitive images connected to maintenance (86.2 % of the interviewed). The proportion of those who think that the economic life and the customs and traditions connected to the important moments in people's lives (birth, marriage, and death) contributed to the subsistence and development of the communities is over 20% (*Figure 7*).
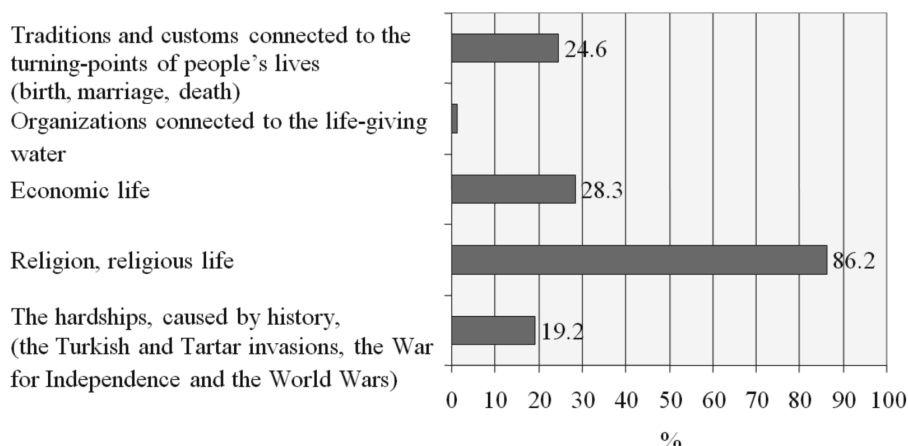
Source: the supplementary questions connected to mental maps; ed. by Ambrus, 2016

Figure 7. *The factors that influenced the formation and subsistence of the communities*

4.4.2. The Community Organizations Connected to the Life-Giving and Life-Ensuring Water

Fountain Communities

The inhabitants of the *tízes* usually used stream-water for washing and watering the animals. The water needed for drinking and cooking was primarily provided by natural freshwater springs and dug fountains. As they did not dig fountains on the building plot of every house, the *tízes* fountain got the role of providing these people with water. A *tízes* fountain could gather a community of several families (10–20).

Most of the time, the *tízes* fountains were situated in the widened square, as the optimal access to it was an important aspect. The inhabitants of the *tízes* carried out the digging of the fountain, the installation of the fountain mechanism, and the related repair works with voluntary, cooperative, and common work (*kaláka*). The work in *kaláka* means helping work, which is primarily based on the regulation of the relations between the individual and the community. Several fountains were named after the families that lived around it (for example, in Csíkbánkfalva, the locals can recall the square of the fountain of the Sánta family, but the location of the fountain fell into oblivion).

Frequently, the fountain as a landmark gave the inspiration to the locals when they named the streets (for example, the *Kicsikút* – Little Fountain – street in Csíkszentdomokos). These spaces became the scenes of community formation and local social relations due to the presence of the fountains. They often announced the news in front of the fountains. This was the place where the children played, the young fell in love, the women gossiped and exchanged information, and the men discussed their everyday problems.
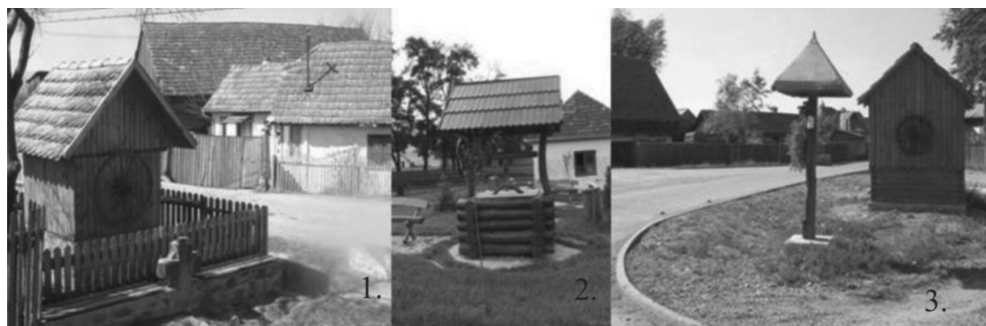
Note: 1., 3. – Csíkszentmiklós, 2. – Csíkszentgyörgy (photos by Erőss 2009)
Figure 8. *The 'tízes' fountains in the spatial structure of the settlements*

During the work on the field, I realized that the exploration of the old *tízes* fountains and fountain-community networks is impossible at the beginning of the 21ˢᵗ century. We can only make deductions from the nomenclature (*Kicsikút* Street) and the interviews with the elderly referring to the existence of the old *tízes* fountains and their spatial division. This is primarily due to the fact that the technological structures of the 20ᵗʰ century (infrastructural development) rearranged these inherited relics and social self-organizations. The traditional *tízes* fountains lost their original function and their community-forming role. Naturally, there are settlements where people recognized the uniqueness and strength of these fountains. The local government, the commonage, or the descendants of the fountain communities restored them, and today the inhabitants of the given *tízes* maintain it together (*Figure 8*). The following adage is relevant here: we can build a larger building but not an older one. In this case: we can build a larger fountain but not an older one.

Well-Spring Communities

The springs, which spout their high-quality and cold mesothermal *borvíz* (naturally sparkling mineral water), which were located close to the inlot, and which were formed as a result of the early post-volcanic activities, played an important role in the everyday life of the inhabitants. The elderly reported 'miraculous recoveries' from rheumatic diseases (informants: Ambrus 2010, 2012, 2014; Both 2016; Bors 2008; Domokos 2016; Erőss 2014; Ferencz 2016; Kánya 2014; Sándor 2016).

The *borvíz* was available to the people only thanks to the *tízes* and the *szeg*, which maintained the order. They needed an outlet tool through which the *borvíz* could be drawn. The locals called this tool *küpü* (*Figure 9*). A fence was raised around the spring, and a path was carefully laid to it. Straying from the path raised ethical questions. It was not appropriate to tread down the plants of the hayfield.

Even in our days, there are *tízes* communities which, as a result of modernization, had the water of the mineral water springs laid at the centre of the *tízes* and equipped the final station of the running water with a fountain mechanism – for example, the community of Háromtízes, in Csíkszentgyörgy, along the Fiság Stream (*Figure 10*). Even today, the order-keeping *tízes* communities sometimes organize a *kaláka*, a voluntary, common work, to repair these relics. They even express their aesthetic need by decorating them with flowers.

Figure 9. *A 'küpü' on the mineral water spring – near Csíkszenttamás*

Figure 10. *A mineral water fountain in Háromtízes, Csíkszentgyörgy*

Livestock-Watering Communities

Other representative examples of thinking in a community are the drinking-troughs for animals (*Figure 11*). These were the products of livestock farming on the alpine pastures belonging to commonage associations on the territory of the forests situated along the alpine pastures or often on built-up areas. The drinking-troughs were built and maintained together. Consequently, the stock-watering communities are also worth keeping count of in the present inventory.


Photo by: Ambrus 2012

Figure 11. *Drinking-troughs on the territory of a commonage association*

Bridge Communities

In the case of the linearly developing *tízes*, along the rivers, the crossing on the streams situated in the inlot and the outer areas was ensured by planks or footbridges of different sizes, made of stone or wood. Due to the big burden and the ravages of the floods, they had to be constantly repaired. Their maintenance and servicing was the duty of the given *tízes*, and this work was most of the time performed in a *kaláka*, common work. We can also say that the society of the *tízes* which owned a bridge was divided into bridge communities. Ethnologist János Bárth reconstructed three bridge communities along the Fiság Stream (*Figure 12*).

In the past, bridge communities elected a bridge adjudicator. The elected bridge adjudicator took an oath, and he took over and directed the work. The farmer living near the bridge was often entrusted with the frequently appearing repairing tasks by the general meeting of the *tízes*. The diligent bridge repairer could expect a reward for his activities performed in the interest of the community. The inhabitants of the *tízes* and the *szeg* also helped each other. In need, they assisted the building of the crossings on the territory of the other *tízes* with wood or stone because their inhabitants and livestock also used them.
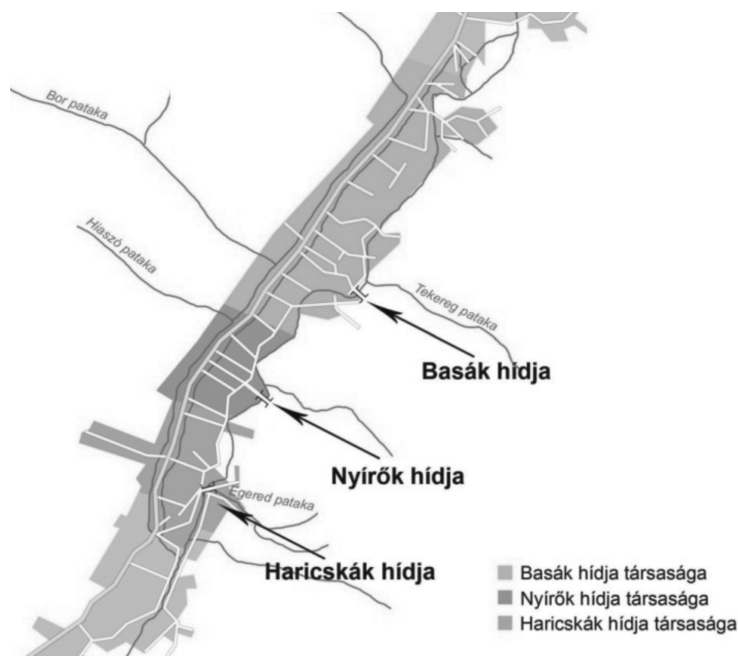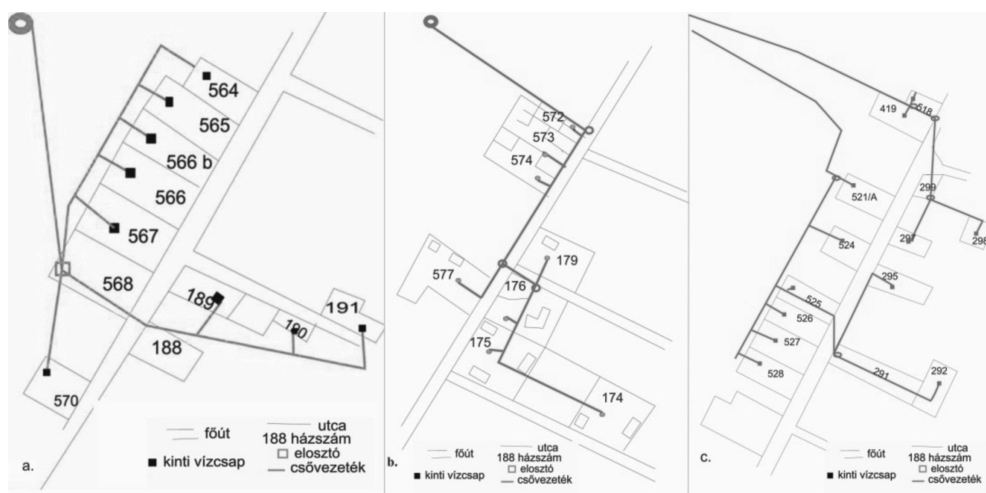
Figure 12. *The bridge communities of the 'tízes' of Jenőfalva, in Csíkszentgyörgy*

Water-Conduit Communities

At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries – according to the needs of the age –, some *tízes* formed water-conduit communities (for example, the *tízes* along the Fiság). This happened because there was an increasing need for running water, and frequently the local self-government, due to financial reasons, could not undertake the building of a water-conduit which could cover the *tízes*. That is why, the *tízes*, which recognized the advantages of the traditional community organization, tried to exploit the opportunities offered by nature on their own, 'behind the mayor's back' (Ex verbum: György 2007).

Water-conduit communities were formed in the place where there was somebody who organized the association, roped in the specialists, did the administrative work, purchased the necessary material, and mobilized the neighbours for the common work (*kaláka*). Those who entered the community declared the seriousness of their intention with their signature. During the work, the excavated, coated, and covered reservoirs were made. The water flew through a pipeline to the houses of the inhabitants which lived in that part of the village.

Some good examples of these communities are the water-conduit community of the Bor Stream, in the *tízes* of Jenőfalva, the water-conduit community of Hiászópataka, whose water-conduit system was built in the spring of 2005 (as an example of the reasonable traditional management but 'behind the mayor's back' because of economic-political reasons), the Sás Garden, belonging to the *tízes* of Három, and the water-conduit community which exploited the Monyasd Stream (2002). Based on the instructions given by the informants, (Kánya 2014, Kersztes 2014, Czikó 2014), two of my students went to the reservoirs and, following the lines of the water-conduit, charted the families that used the water of a given stream. Their schematic drawings appear on *Figure 13*.

Source: based on the work of Lívia Domokos 2014, ed. by Ambrus 2016

Figure 13. *The schematic drawings of the water-conduit communities of the Bor (a.), Hiászó (b.), and Monyasd, (c.) springs in Csíkszentgyörgy*

On the whole, we can state that the *tízes*, which was based on traditional rules, was formed as the sustainable combination of the structures of the entire local society, and it went along the phases and stages of farming and cultural life. It is not only the totality of individual goods and success, but it is more than that: it is the common orientation of proper thinking and the pragmatic series of

actions, the synergy of small communities. In these organizations, not only the initiative came from 'below', but the local people also recognized in them the complex process and effect of the organization of communities. They realized that they could not stop at the phase of the initiative. Thus, the efficiency of the economic prosperity led to the substantial essence of the inner control. Although we frequently assert the positive aspects of the development from below, the authorities of the county, the country, or the European Union still regulate, control, intimidate, and punish from above.

Postface

While Europe is striving to find its own unity among the future powers, beyond its cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity, a unity which is different from the subjection to the great corporations of selfish individuals, the *tízes*, makes us think about the message transmitted by a community whose unity comes from deep and is not based on a vision of identity but the revelation of the specific value which offers increment to the whole society. We can describe or prove the historicity of a compact space or community, interpreted from a natural or social point of view, not only with the help of written documents but also with the cooperating power of the given community, the wisdom with which it ripened and built its lifestyle, system of values, ethical norms, spiritual and material values as well as with the bearers of the genius loci. Thus, the 'income' of the population of Szeklerland does not exclusively originate from economic sectors (for example, the production of food and industrial raw material), projects, applications, and chemicals but also from performing the public, cultural, and religious duties.

The beginning of the 21st century confirms in traces the strength of the communities, the presence of the norms of the well-ripened culture, and the otherness. Perhaps, after a few decades, we will realize that the survey was carried out just in time. There were still people to be interviewed as the results still confirm the strength of the communities and their norms, the spirit of the place, and the presence of this well-ripened folk culture. Perhaps, we will have to admit that the so indispensable real communities will not be brought back by any projects, strategies, applications, or chemicals neither by Brussels nor by Bucharest. It is possible that, with the tendencies of globalization gathering ground, a confused and disconcerted system of values or conscience of norms will lead to inorganization and, ultimately, to the disintegration of the whole healthy social system. I have mentioned only the spirit of the place so far, but it is closely connected to the spirit of the age, which expresses the relations of the given age with life, the laws of the world, and the human beings. The spirit of every age is deposited, it leaves a trace after itself. Statal socialism or the aspirations

which chase the false illusions of the 21ˢᵗ century and urge globalization are not exceptions to this rule. As the researcher of the topic, I can only assume that in case of an emergency the creativity of people grows, and there still might be a chance for the reorganization and survival of the communities based on real values. We will be able to transfer knowledge and wisdom to the 3ʳᵈ millennium, as well, and responsibly maintain the genius of the place. We will be able to relate to the knowledge, the norms, and the wisdom that could be used for the benefit of the community by the individuals living in the *tízes* and the *szeg*.

The *tízes* is a historical and system-based model in the 3ʳᵈ millennium as well, which could mean a framework for settlement development and, in a larger sense, regional development. The tradition of the Szekler *tízes* could mean the basis of the future because we cannot find a better option than this complex, organic model. It can mean a capital for the entire society if our conceptual definitions rely on the bases dictated by history and the characteristics of the region. Consequently, the talent of the recognized *tízes* could reconcile the old and new dichotomy.

At the current 'turning-point' in the history of Szeklerland, the Szekler village *tízes*, with its delayed development but its special model as a well-ripened basic unit of community oganization and economic organization, can fit in the science and practice of economy planning and controlling, which evolves through itself, and the headway of the renewed mentality that relies on systems. If this mentality appears well in the *tízes* culture, the existence of the people will be richer.

Based on the research results, I think that we can get out of the impasse of the negative evidence if we relate to the complex, well-ripened, organic community models based on subject bases because it seems that nobody has devised a better one. If one is in an impasse, he can recoil when he hits a wall and be stuck there, but, as a committed member of a community, he has the ethical duty to serve the will to live, to find the way out, and the recoil in the impasse does not always mean a withdrawal, but it can be a wise quest for the right way, the hope to find and see the right path.

On the basis of the already existing research results and the orientation of the present work, I can state the following as a thesis:

– We still have to research the *tízes* because there are still things to be researched. We still have things to lose and there are still things to be won.

– It is a compact space, interpreted in a natural and social respect, and the historicity of the community living in this space has to be viewed, interpreted, described, and proved in connection with it.

– The well-ripened spiritual values of a community (family, settlement, settlement part, region, micro- or macro-region) and the wisdom with which it has ripened and built its lifestyle, ethical norms, and models 'produce' a defining system of values. Following the good examples is a wise purpose and a practical wisdom.

– The historicity of a space and the historical events which formed the community of a given settlement define its system of values. It is not better or worse than the communities, families of the other settlements in the Carpathian Basin or the other detached ethnical groups on the earth. It is just *different*.

This study tries to prove that exact otherness; maybe it presents the complex, organic Szekler village from a new point of view, as a settlement organization which can function as a model. The Szekler village *tízes*, as a unique spatial and settlement category in its own kind, as a geographical and community-organizing entity and value, colligated the necessity and the inspiration, the will for local action. I think that development, which is a continuous phenomenon, should be accomplished in a way that does not lead to the disappearance of the subsistence-ensuring *tízes* communities, as the model of organization, functioning, and development offered by a viable, sustainable system could offer the basis for human systems and the development of smaller or larger communities in our days. The wise energy of the present and the future lie in the strength of real communities. That is why we have to strengthen the communities in their existence. That is one of the challenges of today's science, churches, and politics. In the social environment of our age, it would actually be natural if science and politics focused on strengthening the self-organizing abilities of local communities and on the opportunities that lie in the support given to community organization and community development. However, science and politics should just appear in the world of the *tízes*, which have a specific past, people should start to think on their own, and not just try to make the decaying social tendency more endurable. They cannot maintain the faith, the school, the church, or the economy of a weakened community with EU applications and trendy projects or chemicals. If the EU could stick to its original, basic concepts, it would not promote or be interested in what the newly joined countries can copy from it but how they can enrich its culture.

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