

## CENSUS STUDIES IN HUNGARY: THE EXAMPLE OF ZSAMBEK, 1715-70

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Readers of **Local Population Studies** may remember the article by Rudolf Andorka on birth control in some Hungarian villages during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (**LPS** 22, Spring 1979). His results were derived from reconstitutions. But we have recently heard of a study carried out on more traditional lines. This work was originally undertaken by Balázs Nagy prior to entering the University of Budapest 'Eötvös Lóránd', and we include below a summary of this thirty page paper. The study is interesting for the general approach by a student previously unfamiliar with the source material. The study deals with changes in the ethnic composition of the population, using the evidence of surnames.

'Before using archive material I endeavoured to read the relevant chapters of some general works. From these I prepared the comprehensive part of my study, valid for the whole country. On the strength of the changes in the country as a whole I attempted to discover similar patterns at the local level by an intensive study of the surviving censuses of 1715, 1720, and 1728. In studying them I had to rely on my scanty knowledge of Latin acquired during four years in High School. The 1770 census was written in German and as I had no German at all I had to compare the text with that for another community which used the same format but in Hungarian.

The result of my study showed a considerable build-up of population after 1715. The registered surnames suggest that the population at this date was entirely Hungarian. However, by 1720 when the families had increased from 40 to 104 almost half the surnames were German in origin. Further change followed by 1728, when 175 taxpaying households in ZsámbeK were divided as follows: 138 German and 37 Hungarian. This change in the balance of nationalities is associated, I believe, with the attempt of the local landlord to enforce the Catholic religion, which caused some Hungarian Protestants to move to neighbouring villages. The massive increase in the number of families of German origin is part of the process of the fresh colonization of under-populated land which was opened up at the withdrawal of the Turks from the area in 1699'.