



“per sylvam et per lacus nimios”

The Medieval and Ottoman Period in
Southern Transdanubia, Southwest Hungary:
the Contribution of the Natural Sciences

Institute of Archaeology
Research Centre for the Humanities
Hungarian Academy of Sciences

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The Medieval and Ottoman Period in Southern
Transdanubia, Southwest Hungary:
the Contribution of the Natural Sciences

In memoriam Zsuzsa Miklós

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Transdanubia, Southwest Hungary:
the Contribution of the Natural Sciences

Edited by
Gyöngyi Kovács and Csilla Zatykó

Institute of Archaeology
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"per sylvam et per lacus nimios" ("across a forest and a multitude of lakes") is how a pilgrim travelling to the Holy Land in the eleventh century described his crossing across the Drava River. Reading the Ottoman-period travelogues written some six hundred years later, it seems that the Drava region had changed little during the centuries. The extensive woodlands and marshy areas of the contemporary landscape still preserve some of the characteristics of the past environment.

The interdisciplinary research project entitled "Studies on Settlement Archaeology and Environmental History in Southern Transdanubia, 1300–1700" aimed at exploring this landscape, its changes, and the impact of the region's communities on this land during the medieval and Ottoman period. As a border area, the Drava district, selected for more detailed studies within the region, was relatively undisturbed by intensive construction work in the Modern Age, and it was, therefore, a place where new directions for investigations could be formulated.

The present volume offers a summary of the environmental history and the findings of the natural scientific analyses of this interdisciplinary research program. Although earthenware, bones, and soil samples were examined in the analyses, the focus of our research was always on human beings and their activities. The aim was to uncover the kinds of settlements they lived in, the kinds of artifacts they used, the kinds of food they ate, and the kind of environment they lived in, as well as the kind of responses they gave to the environmental challenges they faced.

The archaeological findings of the project – part of which have already been published in preliminary reports – will appear in a subsequent volume.