



Contribution to the mapping history of the Žitný Ostrov (Csallóköz)

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Multichannel reach downstream of the Devín Gate (borderline reach of the Middle Danube between Slovakia and Hungary from Bratislava to Komárno/Komárom) is depicted on many medium- to large-scale historical maps. Some of them had been already made in the 16th and 17th centuries as military surveys during campaigns against Ottoman forces. These maps are very important since they represent the historical river pattern during the period of changing discharge through individual major channels.

The comparatively peaceful period following the termination of the last anti-Habsburg uprising of Ferenc II. Rákóczi (1703-11) resulted in an unprecedented increase in both number and accuracy of maps depicting the territory of Žitný Ostrov (Csallóköz) Island. Unprecedented in terms of the coverage of territories and systematic approach are the maps of the first (1783-4) and the second (around 1822 in this area) military mapping. Irretrievable for the knowledge of the river development are also the Danube representations on the regional-scaled county maps of S. Mikovíni and his successors from 1732 onward. All of these maps are currently becoming the subject of intensive study since they depict the Danube River during the relevant channel changes associated with the climatic and land-use changes of the culminating Little Ice Age period. The analyses of channel changes are conveniently supplemented by numerous local maps from ca. 1712 onward, which are gradually becoming accessible to the public (e. g. two last releases of the local manuscript maps from the Hungarian archives – of Széchényi library or from the collection of the Hungarian Documentenential Office, published on DVDs). These local maps and plans allow to date many natural and man-made channel changes and features, such as cutoffs or new-built embankments, and

enable to confirm and better understand the data of regional and military maps.