

**BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF GEOGRAPHY**

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

The German Settlements in the Apold-Orăștie Corridor (Unterwald). Historical Geography Study

Doctoral adviser,

Univ. Prof. Nicolae Ciangă, PhD.

Doctoral candidate,

Assist. Schuster Eduard

CLUJ-NAPOCA

2014

Content

Introduction	3
1. Theoretical concepts	6
1.1. Definition of historical geography and its place among human sciences.....	6
1.2. Concepts.....	9
1.3. Research principles and methods in human geography.....	12
1.3.1. Principles.....	12
1.3.2. Methods.....	13
2. Geographical location and delimitation of the studied area	20
2.1. Location and delimitation of the studied area	21
2.2. Toponymy aspects regarding Unterwald	24
3. Physical geographical premises for the establishment and development of the settlements.....	27
3.1. Relief.....	27
3.2. Hydrography	33
3.3. Climate.....	40
3.4. Bio-pedological conditions	46
3.4.1. Soils.....	46
3.4.2. Vegetation	47
4. Historical and administrative evolution of the historical region of Unterwald	50
4.1. From the beginnings tot the German colonisation (12 th century).....	50
4.2. German colonisation. Establishing and defending the autonomy. Evolution of the Saxon community within the Hungarian Kingdom.....	52
4.2.1. Colonisation of Western European settlers in southern Transylvania.....	52
4.2.2. Establishing and defending the autonomy	59
4.3. The period of the Principality of Transylvania	66
4.4. The period of the Habsburg Empire and of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.....	69
4.5. Within the Kingdom of Romania. The Interwar Period (1918-1944)	72
4.6. The Communist Regime (1944-1989).....	73
4.7. The last episode: The exodus. The Transylvanian Saxons in Germany.....	74
5. The German settlements from the Apold-Orăștie Corridor (Unterwald). Demographic aspects	76
5.1. Social and economic premises of the colonisation	77
5.2. European historical frame at the time of colonisation	78
5.3. The origins of the Saxons from Unterwald.....	81
5.4. Saxon colonisation in Unterwald.....	83
5.5. Demographic evolution and ethnic structure.....	87
5.6. Society	94
5.6.1. The Neighbourhoods (Nachbarschaften)	94
5.7. Educational system.....	96
6. The German settlements from the Apold-Orăștie Corridor (Unterwald).	99
6.1. Founding of the Saxon settlements and their spatial distribution.....	100
6.2. Territorial expansion and structure of the settlements	103
6.3. Relations between central and peripheral spaces	119
7. Functional characteristics (the economy)	123
7.1. Cultural-historical premises for economic development	123
7.2. Agriculture.....	128
7.3. Establishment and development of craftsmanship	132
7.4. The guilds and their role in economic development.....	134
7.5. Industrialisation and the development of the traditional industries	136
7.5.1. The second "industrialisation" and planned economy.....	138
7.6. Transport infrastructure.....	139
8. The influences of the German community on Romanian space	147
Conclusions.....	149
Bibliography	153
Table of figures	160
Appendix	161

Keywords: Apold-Orăștie Corridor, German settlements, Unterwald, historical geography, Saxons, Landlers, history of Transylvania, Saxon Seats, Seat Orăștie, Seat Sebeș, Seat Miercurea, territorial evolution of settlements, population growth, demographic structures, economy of the German settlements, transportation infrastructure development in the Apold-Orăștie Corridor

Introduction

In the field of territorial research, geography and history overlap, forming more complex relations of subordination or complementarity as the territorial and social analysis is more thorough. In their attempt to explain spatial and landscape structures, man-environment relations, and territorial structures, geographers often need historical facts in order to determine which events, patterns, and changes influenced the landscape. In the same manner, historians need to understand the geographical features surrounding historical events in order to explain the past better.

Choosing this title was the result of an introspective process, along with the realisation that there is a knowledge and geographical research niche for the historical region of Unterwald as a cultural landscape and historical unit.

The historical region of Unterwald was never referred to as such in geographical studies. Even if various historical, geographical, or ethnographical papers include settlements or regions from Unterwald (i.e. Saxon Seats), their references to Unterwald are tangential. All this is more reason to try to complete the knowledge about Unterwald and to recreate the geographies of this region.

I hereby want to express my sincerest thanks to the Doctoral Adviser of this thesis, Professor Nicolae Ciangă, whose advice, trust and patience were decisive for this work.

1. Theoretical concepts

1.1. Definition of historical geography and its place among human sciences

One of the most simple definitions of historical geography is found in *A Modern Dictionary of Geography* (Witherick et al., 2001): "The geography of the past; the

academic 'borderland' between geography and history". Another definition mentions the relations of causality between history and geography (Derek et al., 2009): „A sub-discipline of human geography dealing with the geographies of the past and the influence of the past in shaping the geographies of today and tomorrow". A anthropocentric definition is given by Winfried Schenk in *Historische Geographie* (Schenk, 2011): „Historical geography, in a strict sense, has to be understood as a territorial science dealing with processes of human activities which bear spatial relevance and with the resultant spatial structures, at one given moment in the past".

Regarding historical geography, there are three interrelated themes that are relevant:

- Historicity of geography;
- Spatiality and temporality of social life and human identity;
- Higher interest for man-environment relations and for the bond between human society and nature.

1.2. Concepts

Historical region

Although Unterwald is mentioned on several maps of Transylvania or Hungary, there never existed a body with this name (ecclesial or political). It is nevertheless a historical region by means of the mental space of "Land" created by the Transylvanian Saxons through assuming a common history in the south-west of Transylvania; it does not include, however, the southern mountain region, perceived rather as a Romanian hinterland.

Historical landscape

Unlike the geographic natural landscape, which emphasize the spatial component, the historical landscape highlights the temporal dimension. The historical landscape is marked by the presence of central places, and mainly by their function as centres of power. For this type of landscape there is need for a stronger interdisciplinary research.

Cultural landscape

The cultural landscape is a landscape shaped by the presence an activities of humans. Important in the creation and evolution of cultural landscapes are both nature and man, as well as the correlations between them. The term „cultural" does not refer strictly to an agricultural landscape, but is the expression of any human activities.

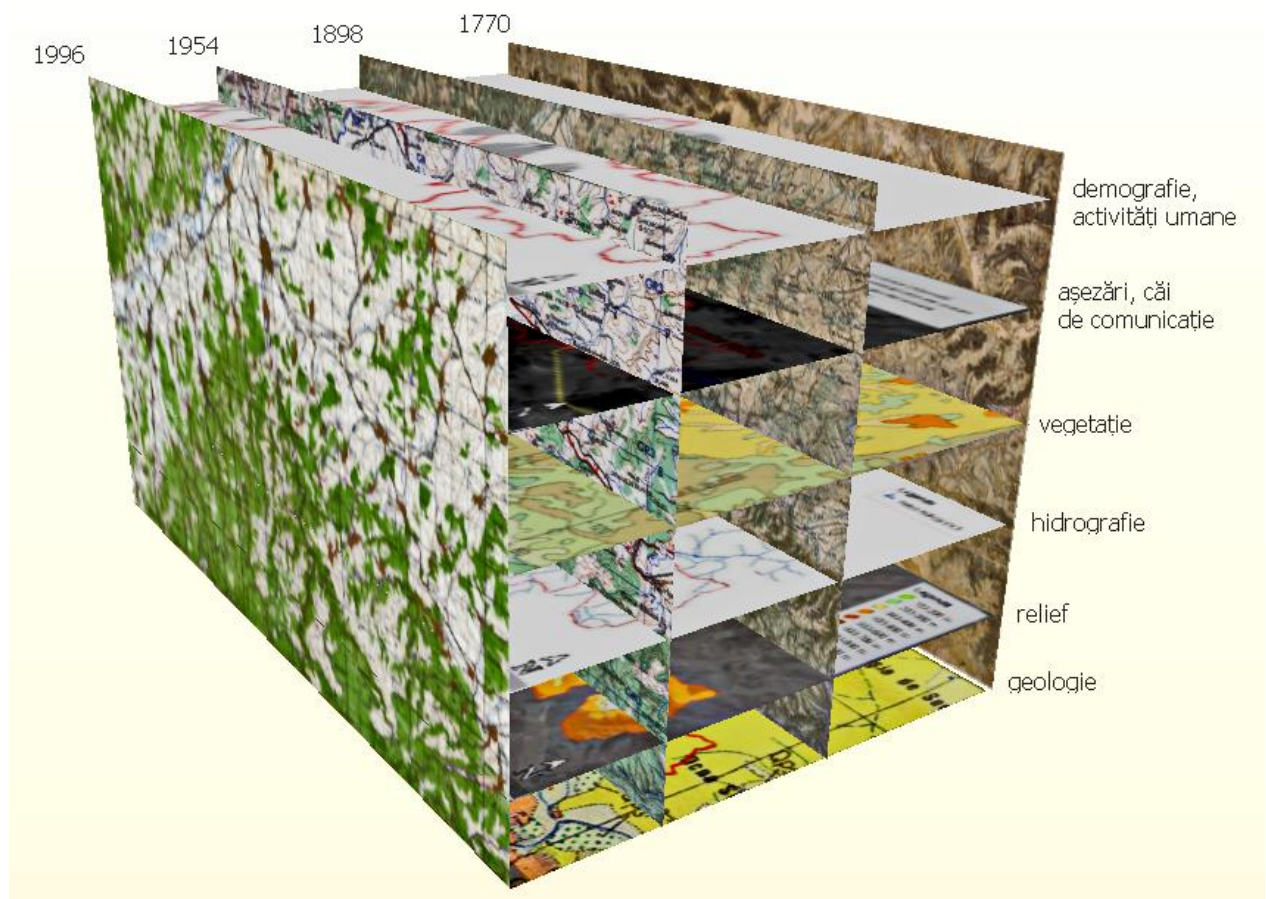
1.3. Research principles and methods in human geography

1.3.1. Principles

The principle of verification is a particular form of the comparative principle. In the historical geography research, every hypothesis is to be verified thoroughly by comparing it with similar situations.

Another principle postulates the *very exact information on the historical context of the manifestation of geographical reality*.

The principle of differentiation states that historical geography research must rely on a clear differentiation between various categories of geographical reality. Also important is the scale at which a geographical phenomenon happens.



The method of geographical interpretation of historical-geographical elements results ultimately in historical-geographical maps, through cartographical expression of the information stored at the intersection of levels

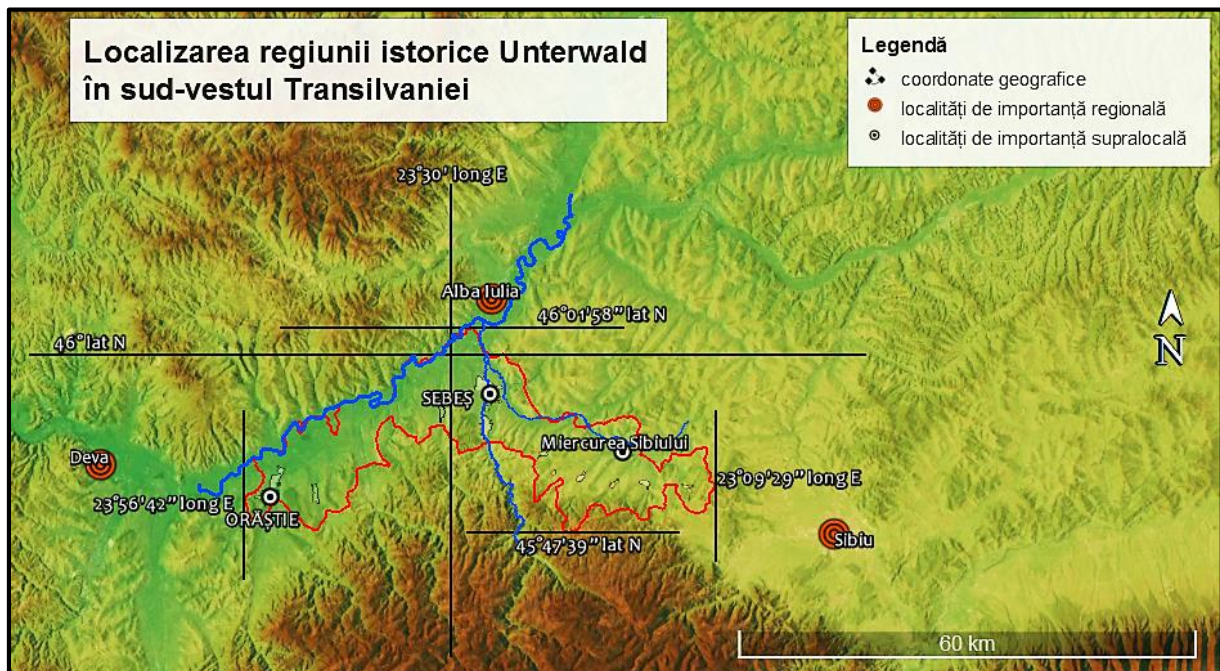
1.3.2. Methods

There are a lot of methods that can be used in this field, the methodology being adapted from older sciences related to historical geography (geography, history, ethnography, linguistics). The research methodology in historical geography contains two main groups:

- Methods of collecting historical-geographical data (fieldwork, studying maps and atlases, historical documents, images, settlement dictionaries, censuses, conscriptions, regional or local monographs, websites, inscriptions on thumb stones, etc.).
- Methods of interpretation of these data (the geographic method, the comparative-historical method, the linguistic analysis, the statistical method, the informational method).

2. Geographical location and delimitation of the studied area

Unterwald is neither a distinct geographical unit, or a political one, but a combination of the both, united through a mental space of the Transylvanian Saxons. The activities of its inhabitants had created here a unique cultural landscape, with historical, economical, and planning distinctiveness along with the identity of its population creating what we called the historical region of Unterwald.



The historical region of Unterwald stretches over two lower areas in south-western Transylvania: the Orăștie Corridor (west) and the Apold Depression (east)

2.1. Location and delimitation of the studied area

The territory of the historical region of Unterwald stretches between following geographical coordinates: to the north, 46°01'58" N; to the south, 45°47'39" N; to the east, 23°56'42" E; and to the west, 23°09'29" E. Its border is 233 km long, comprising a territory covering 591 km² in the Apold Depression in the east and the Orăștie Corridor in the west.

2.2. Toponymy aspects regarding Unterwald

Cartographic research had revealed a different name for the region until the 18th century: *Land vor dem Wald*, meaning „The Land Before the Forest”, or, in a wider sense, „The Land Beneath the Forest”, with various spellings on different maps (*Land vor dem Wald* – 1532, 1596, 1691, 1705; *Land vor dem Walt* – 17th century; *Land vor dem Waldt* – 1703). The forest mentioned extends in the densely wooded southern mountains of Șureanu and Cindrel. The Șureanu Mts are even named „Waldland” (Woodland) on a map of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy from 1896.

The name „Unterwald” occurs only after the Dualism is established, and the reasons for this name shifting are uncertain. The motives could be linked to the struggle to find a new identity of the Saxons after the dissolution of the Saxon University as a political body.

Even if until the 19th century, maps show the old name „Land vor dem Wald”, a direct translation of the Latin „*antesylvan(i)a*”, there is a distinct possibility that the term „Unterwald” was in use among the inhabitants of the *Royal Lands* (*Fundus Regius*) long before it appeared on German language documents regarding the ecclesial district of Sebeș.

3. Physical geographical premises for the establishment and development of the settlements

3.1. Relief

Even if on regional level Unterwald can be considered an axis-type entity, morphologically there are two distinct units, with some similarities: the Mureș Valley in the

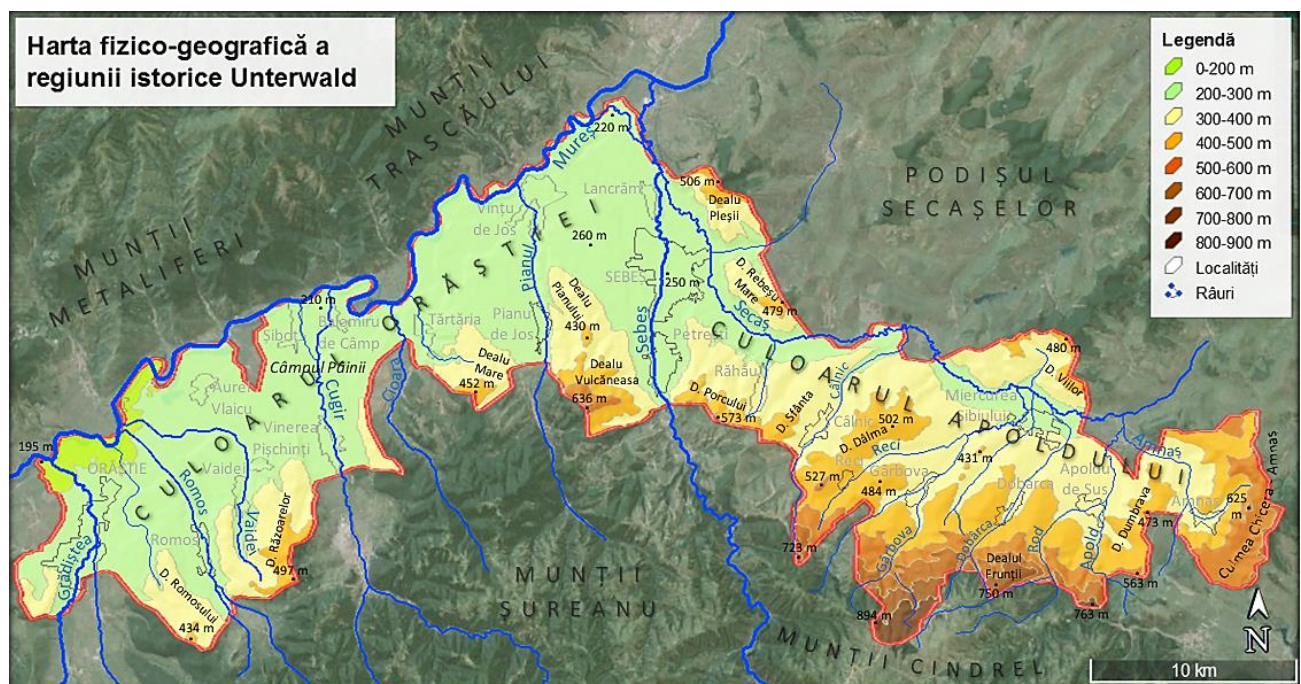
western half and the Apold Depression in the eastern half, contacting in the confluence area of the rivers Secaş, Sebeş and Mureş.

The Mureş (Orăştie) Corridor

The Orăştie Corridor is a long well between the Southern Carpathians and the Apuseni Mts., but its strong connections to the Transylvanian Basin made it be considered at times as a part of this unit, or even as a contact depression or piedmont within the circumtransylvanian system. (Geografia României, III, 1987, p. 360). The River Mureş, pushed toward north, formed a large, 2-5 km wide water meadow at the foot of the Metaliferi Mts. The terraces reach 6-7 levels, the oldest one having a relative altitude of 140-150 m. the lower terraces extent over kilometres on some places, forming what the locals call „Fields” (”Câmpuri”). All levels fall toward the Mureş, giving the appearance of a piedmont.

The Apold Depression

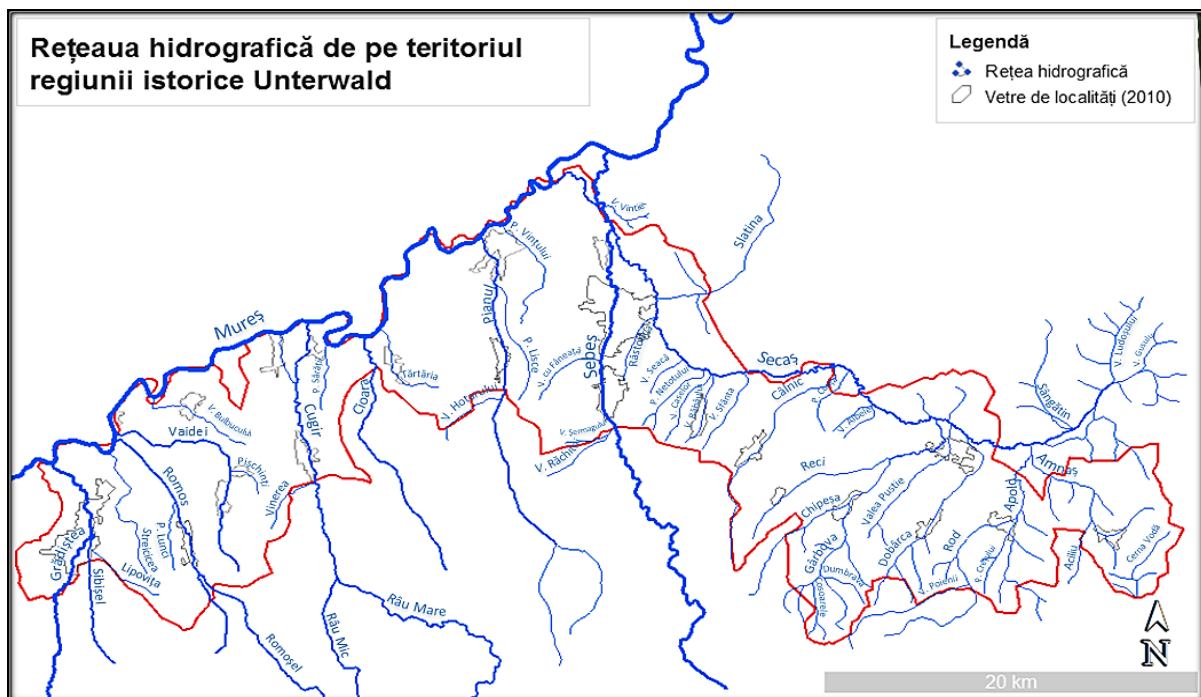
The Apold Depression is a hilly region with a fragmented relief and active landmass processes. This „wing” of the historical region of Unterwald is shaped by the river Secaş and its tributaries, and its asymmetrical cross section influenced the location of settlements. On the contact line between the piedmont and the Cindrel Mts., there are the villages Dobârca, Gârbova, Reci, while in the lower valley, along the Secaş, there are others (Apoldu de Sus, Miercurea Sibiului, Cunţa).



Main morphological features of Unterwald

3.2. Hydrography

The main rivers of Unterwald, which shaped its landscape, are: Mureș (NW), Sebeș (central part of the region) and Secaș. The river system in the eastern part has smaller rivers and is denser; the rivers in the west are larger and have mature valleys. The most dynamic river of the region is Mureș, with a higher flow rate, and its changing course can be traced by comparing maps of the region from different periods, as well as by landmarks.

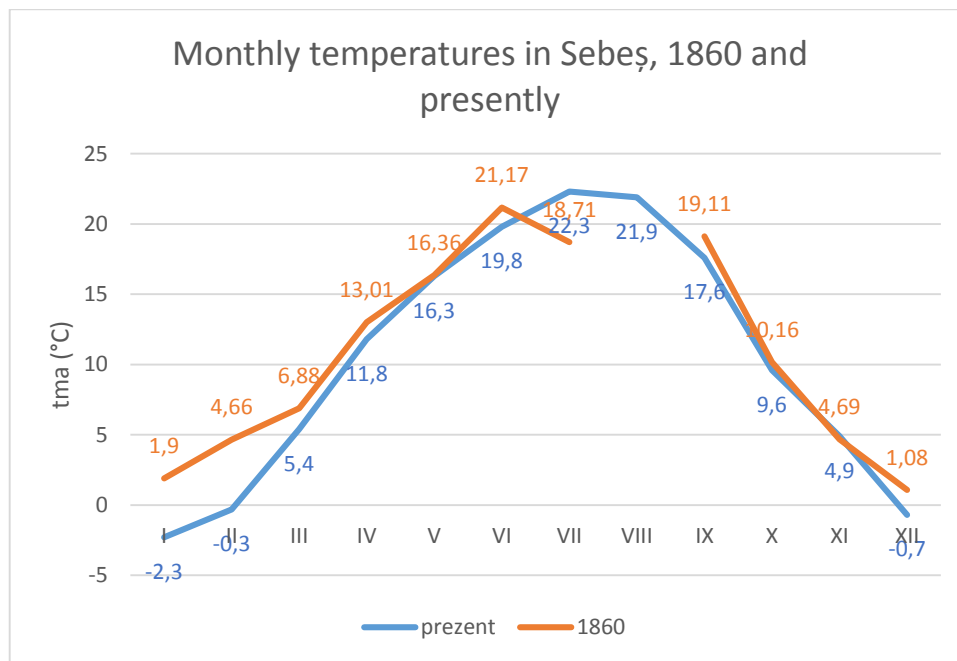


Rețeaua hidrografică a Unterwaldului

3.3. Climate

The climate had always played a major role in creating cultural landscapes through its influence on human activities or architecture.

One of the first mentions on climate conditions in Unterwald belongs to Hyeronimus Ortelius (Oertel, 1665), stating about the region of Alba Iulia that „This land has a mainly tempered air. On flat terrain / namely in the settlements to the south / especially at Alba Iulia, the heat during summer is almost unbearable / so that even cellars barely give shelter: but in the settlements toward the mountains the air is fresher and healthier / so that Transylvania has almost the same air as the neighbouring Hungary”.



Mean temperatures at Sebeș, comparative chart showing 1860 and present-day (2013) conditions, respectively

3.4. Biopedological conditions

At this point we want to present only one example of a description made by Ortelius in 1665 about the forests of Transylvania: „This land Siebenbürgen is surrounded from all sides by mountains / especially the Crapack – probably the Carpathians – and the Mountains of Valachia / like a crown / and one can hardly reach from one town or village to another / some other way than through forests and hills / of which the highest / rise in the middle of Transylvania, at the castle Făgăraș / which are always covered with snow. So did this land received its name from such forests (...)”.

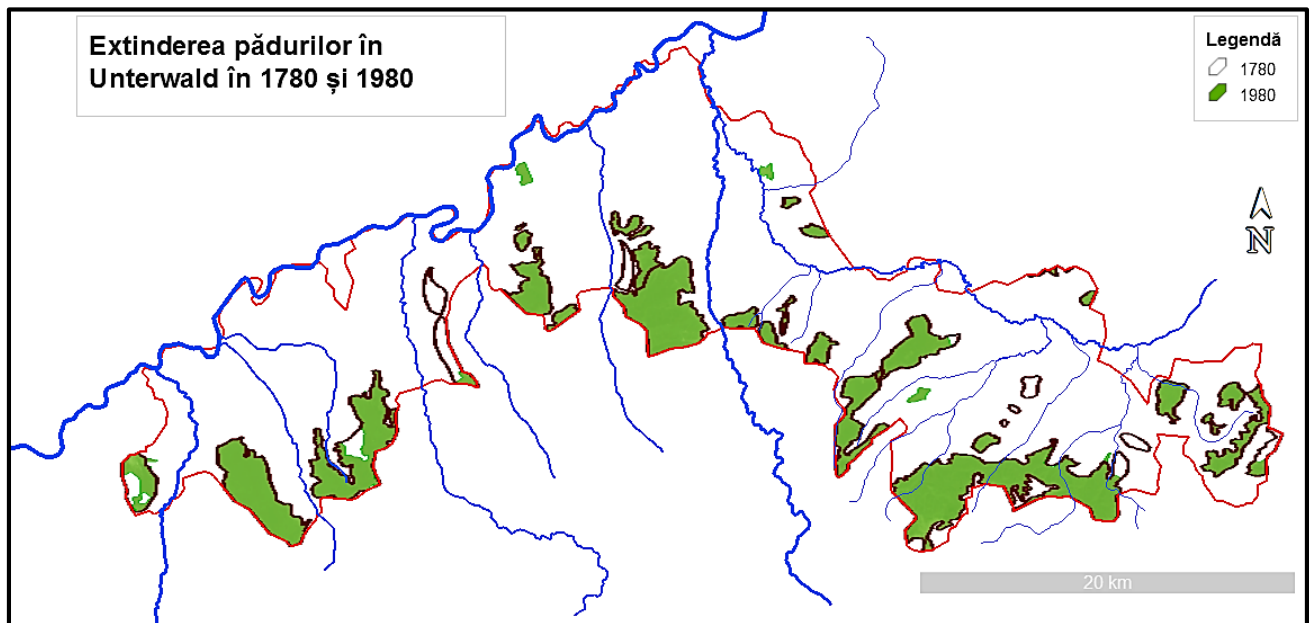
3.4.1. Soils

The main soil types in the Orăștie Corridor are chernozems on the terraces, and brown soils in the higher region, as well as alluvial soils in the floodplains. In the Apold Depression, the water meadows are formed mainly on alluvial soils, while the southern hills and terraces reveal chernozems and brown soils.

3.4.2. Vegetation

Most parts of the piedmonts and higher terraces in the Orăștie Corridor are covered with *Quercus petraea*, *Q. frainetto* and *Fagus Sylvatica*, while gentler sloped hills and terraces are

covered with mesophyle meadows. The lower terraces are entirely agricultural land. In the Apold Depression, the southern hills are covered with *Quercys pertaea* and *Carpinus betulus*, while lower areas are mainly meadows or agricultural land.



Map showing the extension of forests in Unterwald in 1780 and 1980

4. Historical and administrative evolution of the historical region of Unterwald

4.1. From the beginnings to the German colonisation (12th century)

The most important ancient findings date from the time of the Dacian kingdoms and the Roman period, which left traces all over Transylvania. The south-western part, the later Unterwald, benefited from the proximity of the capital of Roman Dacia and the military centre from Apulum (Alba Iulia), headquarter of the XIIIth Gemina legion, and had a vibrant social and economic life.

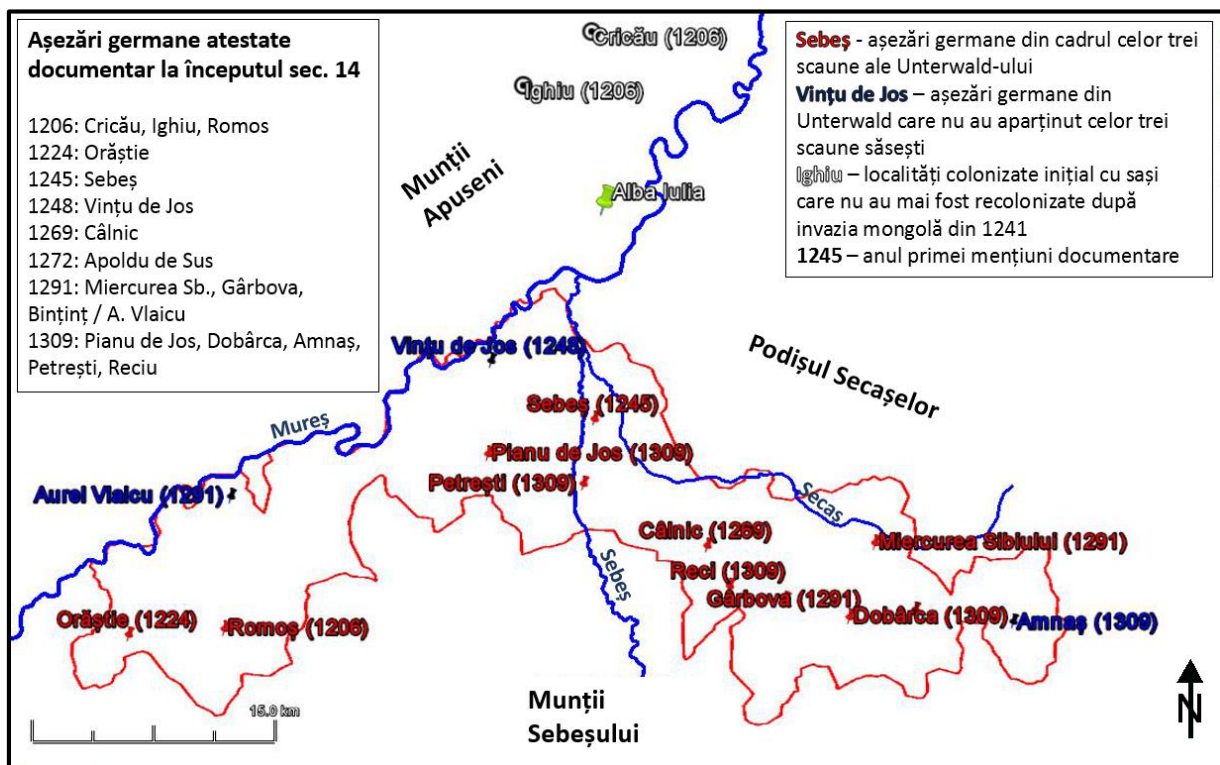
After the Migration Period, the Hungarian conquest in the 8th and 9th centuries was the most influential historical event for the millennia to come, and it was also crucial for the later presence of German settlers in the region.

4.2. German colonisation. Establishing and defending the autonomy. Evolution of the Saxon community within the Hungarian Kingdom

4.2.1. Colonisation of Western European settlers in southern Transylvania

The origin of the German colonists brought here by the Hungarian kings is a controversial matter to the present day. What we can be certain of, trusting historical documents and linguistic evidence, is that small groups from different parts of the Holy Roman Empire and its neighbouring regions (mainly Flanders) travelled to Transylvania at the call of the Hungarian kings. It is an accepted fact that the first wave of colonists consisted of about 520 families, comprising approximately 2600 people (Konrad Gündisch, 1998).

Hungary needed qualified crafts craftsmen and skilled labour force for the economic development of the newly conquered territory, and thus offered generous conditions and land to settlers from Western Europe, where demographic conditions left many pauper. The German settlers, later called „Saxons”, received extended rights trough the Golden Charter from 1224, emitted by king Andreas II., thus also known as the „Andreanum”.



By the year 1309, all important German settlements from Unterwald had been documentary mentioned

4.2.2. Establishing and defending the autonomy

Nowhere else on Saxon territory was the squierarchy, formed by the so-called *Graven* (counts), so powerful as in Unterwald. Proof for this are the old keeps from Călnic, Gârbova and apetrești, still standing after 800 years. The most powerful families were those from Călnic and Petrești, whose fight for autonomy was shadowed by their intention to transform the equalitarian Saxon society in a typical feudal one.

Unterwald suffered greatly all over the Middle Ages from Turkish attacks (1420, 1438, 1442), which impeded its future development, although the region always recovered from recurrent disasters.

4.3. The period of the Principality of Transylvania

After the Battle of Mohács (1526), Hungary was dismantled and Transylvania was transformed in an autonomous principality under formal Turkish suzerainty. As a result of its location at one of the main entrance routes in Transylvania and the proximity of the new capital of the Principality - Alba Iulia, Unterwald was the scene of many struggles for power between various political factions during the 16th and the 17th centuries. A direct effect of this unrests was the severe population reduction and depopulation of settlements (Rother, Wollman, 2011).

The Reformation

After four centuries from their arrival, the Saxons embrace Luther's Reformation. In Transylvania, the Reformation was mainly the work of Honterus, under whose influence the Saxon University empowered the Reformation between 1544 and 1563. All reformed churches united in 1545.

The Saxon University

The University of the Saxon Nation (*Concilium Transylvania Saxonicum*) was a political body of the Transylvanian Saxons (*Siebenbürger Sachsen*), established in 1486 at the order of king Mathias Corvinus, and functioned as an „autonomous administration” until the 19th century (1876), when it was transformed in a powerless foundation until its dissolution in 1937. Its foundation gave the Saxon nation the power of a „political nation” within the Principality, a position held until the 19th century, when the 1848 revolution severely undermined its authority.

4.4. The period of the Habsburg Empire and of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy

Following the victories of the Austrian Monarchy over the Ottoman Empire, Transylvania gets under Austrian influence, and in 1688 willingly enters the Monarchy. The Leopoldine Charter (1691) ensures the religious freedom and the rights of the three privileged nations of Transylvania, functioning as a true constitution until 1848. After the Karlowitz Treaty (1699), Transylvania walks definitely under Austrian rule. The following century is one of relative stability, offering the Saxon communities in Unterwald a chance to recover. However, episodes of war and pest still impede development.

Increasing political pressure from Hungarian nobility on the Monarchy forces the formation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, with Transylvania being again under Hungarian rule. But this time, Saxon privileges are no longer present, and a sustained effort toward Magyarisation starts, affecting living conditions especially in the western part of Unterwald.

4.5. Within the Kingdom of Romania. The Interwar Period (1918-1944)

After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the majority of the Transylvanian Saxons vote in favour of the unification with Romania, being moved to do so under the promises made in the Resolutions from Alba Iulia by the Romanian government (cultural autonomy, the right to keep all properties), but soon after, the 1920 agricultural reforms diminish their lands. The ongoing identity crisis of the Transylvanian Saxons drive them toward more extreme options, the climax of which was the enrolment of some of them in the Waffen-SS, with disastrous consequences for all Saxons in the following years.

4.6. The Communist Regime (1944-1989)

The years following World War II are regarded as the darkest period in Saxon history. The deportations in the Soviet Union (1945-1950) disrupted the entire Saxon society, their way of life and their century-long loyalty toward the state they lived in. Approximately 1200 Saxons from Unterwald were deported in the Donbas region in present-day Ukraine. The following decades saw an increased drive for emigration in West Germany, giving reason to the Communist regime under Ceaușescu to condition their departure by the payment of several thousand Deutsche Mark for each individual, something known as „selling of the Saxons”.

4.7. The last episode: the exodus. The Saxons in Germany

The period between 1990 and 1992 was known as „the Saxon exodus”, when around 80% of them, benefiting from the new political realities, left the homeland of their forefathers and emigrated in Germany.

5. The German settlements in the Apold-Orăștie Corridor (Unterwald), demographic aspects

Not many minorities can claim such a good image on the part of the majority as the Saxons in Transylvania, even if there were times when being a Saxon was not something to wish for. But even in times like that, when xenophobe hatred was state supported, their way of life was a constant source for admiration.

5.1. Social and economic premises of the colonisation

Demographic growth in Western Europe at the beginning of the second Christian millennia moved many people in that area to follow the call of the Hungarian kings to settle in Transylvania in order to ensure its economic development. The rights given to them added to the promise of a free and wealthy future.

5.2. European historical frame in the time of colonisation

The German „Ostsiedlung” (eastward expansion) took place during the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries toward the territories east of the Holy Roman Empire, but also Transylvania. This movement was caused by overpopulation in the western parts of the Empire and the inevitable economic pressure, motivating people to accept to become colonists in less developed regions.

5.3. The origins of the Saxons from Unterwald

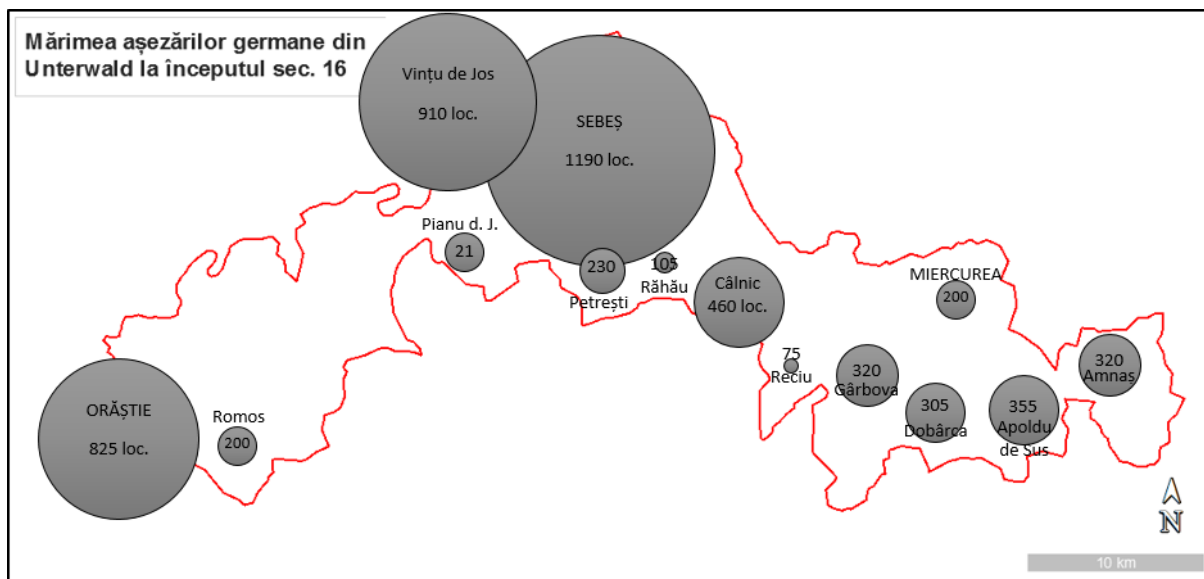
The colonists were of different origins, coming from a region covering the nowadays parts of central-western Germany, northern France, Belgium and Holland. They were thus of German, Flemish, or Walloon origin, eventually forming the later Saxon nation in Transylvania.

5.4. Saxon colonisation in Unterwald

The first settlements founded by the colonists (hospites) were Cricău, Ighiu, and Romos, mentioned in 1206, and Orăștie (1224). After the Tatar invasion from 1241-1242, new colonists gradually arrive in the region of Unterwald, founding new settlements or occupying existing, mainly Szekler ones (Sebeș, first mentioned in 1245; Călnic, in 1269; Apoldu de Sus, in 1272), and soon after, only a century after the first settlements (1309), the last of the Saxon establishments are documentary attested (Pianu de Jos, Petrești, Reci, Dobârca, Amnaș).

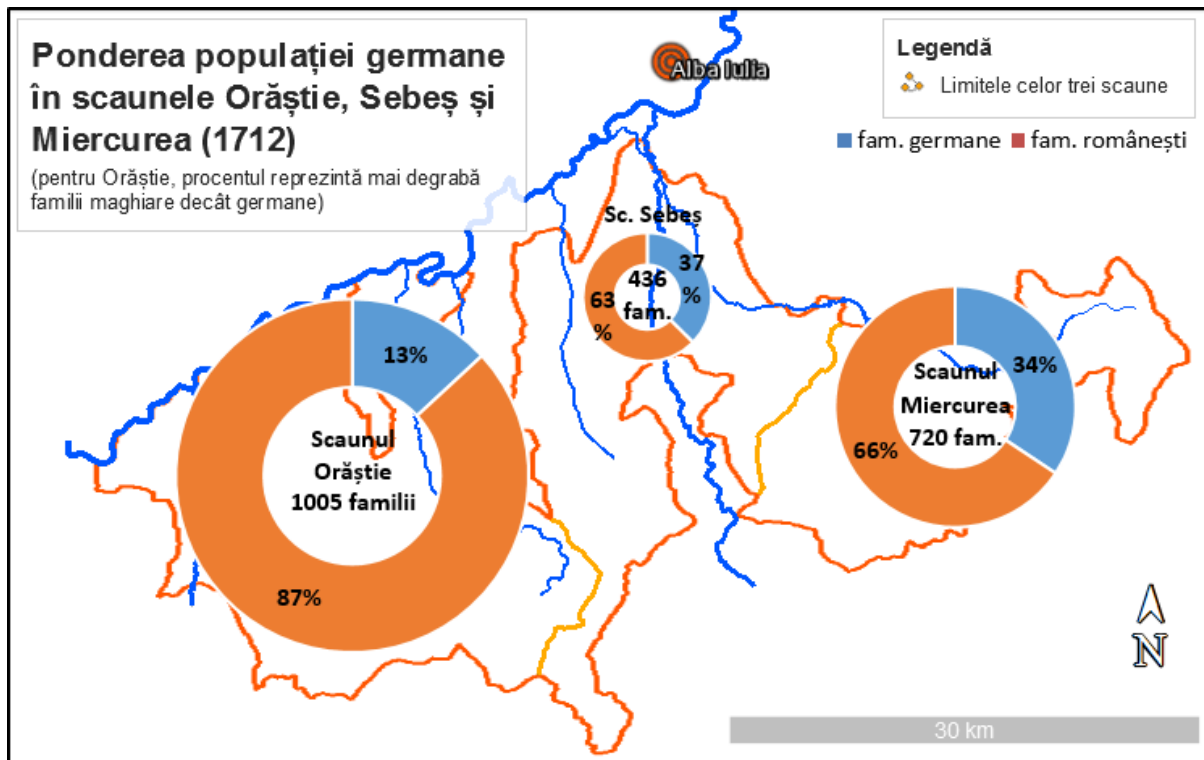
5.5. Demographic evolution and ethnic structure

As shown above, in the history section, the start of Turkish attacks severely affected the evolution and the ethnic structure of the population from Unterwald. In less than two centuries, the Saxon population decrease in numbers as well as percentage of the entire population.



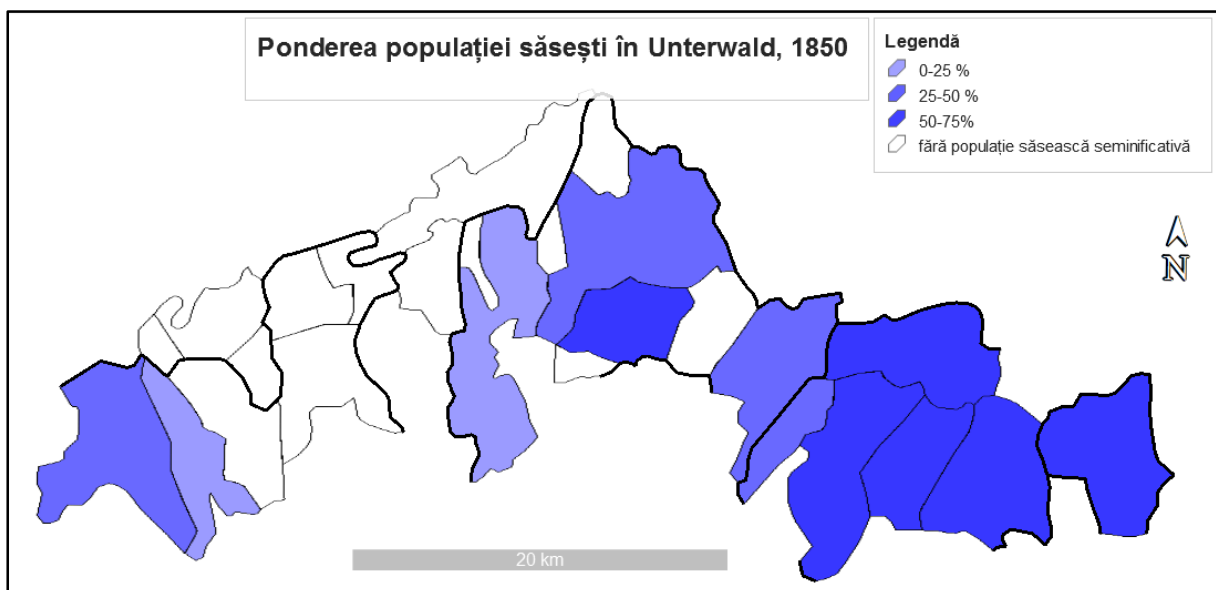
Population of the German settlements in Unterwald at the beginning of the 16th century

Even if the 17th and 18th centuries represent a more peaceful period, the German population never managed to grow to its former extent, and remained a minority in the Saxon seats.



Percentage of German (blue) and Romanian (orange) population in the Saxon Seats of Unterwald at the beginning of the 18th century

During the 19th century, the population of Unterwald experiences a slow but constant growth, and the population of the German settlements reaches 21677 inhabitants in 1850. From them, only 40% were Saxons, with an uneven distribution in the region, with a lower percentage in the west compared to the east.



German population in Unterwald in the 19th century

At the beginning of the 20th century, the population of the German settlements in Unterwald exceeded 34000 inhabitants, a growing trend that was interrupted in the next half century only by the two world wars, even if the growth was not spectacular. The percentage of the German population continues to drop, reaching 36,23% in 1910, and 35,14% in 1930.

Population in the German settlements in the old seats of Unterwald, 1500-2002

	1500	1850	1880	1910	1940	1977	2002
S. Orăștie	1025	6007	7672	9338	8457	19161	22373
S. Sebeș	2090	8319	11222	14125	15374	34113	28223
S. Miercurea	1575	7351	8877	10404	11064	10330	8345
UNTERWALD	4690	21677	27771	33867	34895	63604	58941

5.6. Society

5.6.1. The neighbourhoods

The German communities were organised in *neighbourhoods* – Nachbarschaften, self-sustained units of cooperation and aid between its members, caring for all aspects of community well-being. This form of organisation was „exported” at some degree to other communities, Romanian or Hungarian, in the region, and was kept functional right to the dissolution of Saxon society at the end of the 20th century.

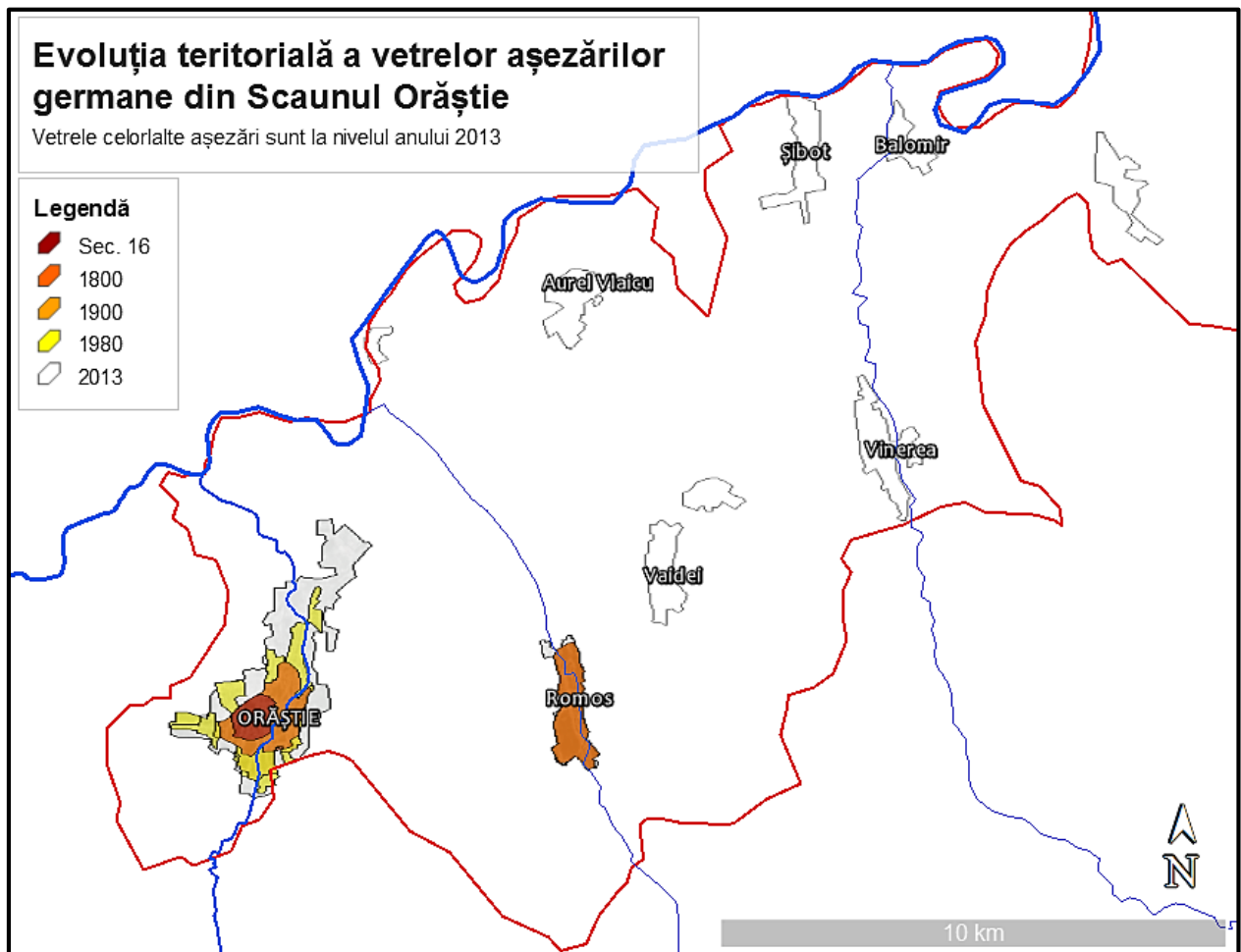
6. The German settlements from the Apold-Orăștie Corridor (Unterwald)

6.1. Founding of the German settlements and their spatial distribution

The Saxon villages were usually planned as compact row villages along a small river, with closed house fronts. The church was erected in the middle of the village, surrounded by a small marketplace. Later, as the settlements grew into towns or evolved as pure agricultural villages, the general architectural design changes, with more complex buildings being constructed in urban settlements.

6.2. Territorial expansion and structure of the settlements

Orăștie was founded around a square marketplace at the southeast corner of a pre-existent, Slav settlement, which was eventually integrated in the Saxon town. The expansion had a concentric evolution until the 18th century; beginning with the 19th century, the towns stretches toward north to reach the newly built railway and to gain access to the new provincial road. This trend continued during the 20th century, giving the town its present-day elongated shape.



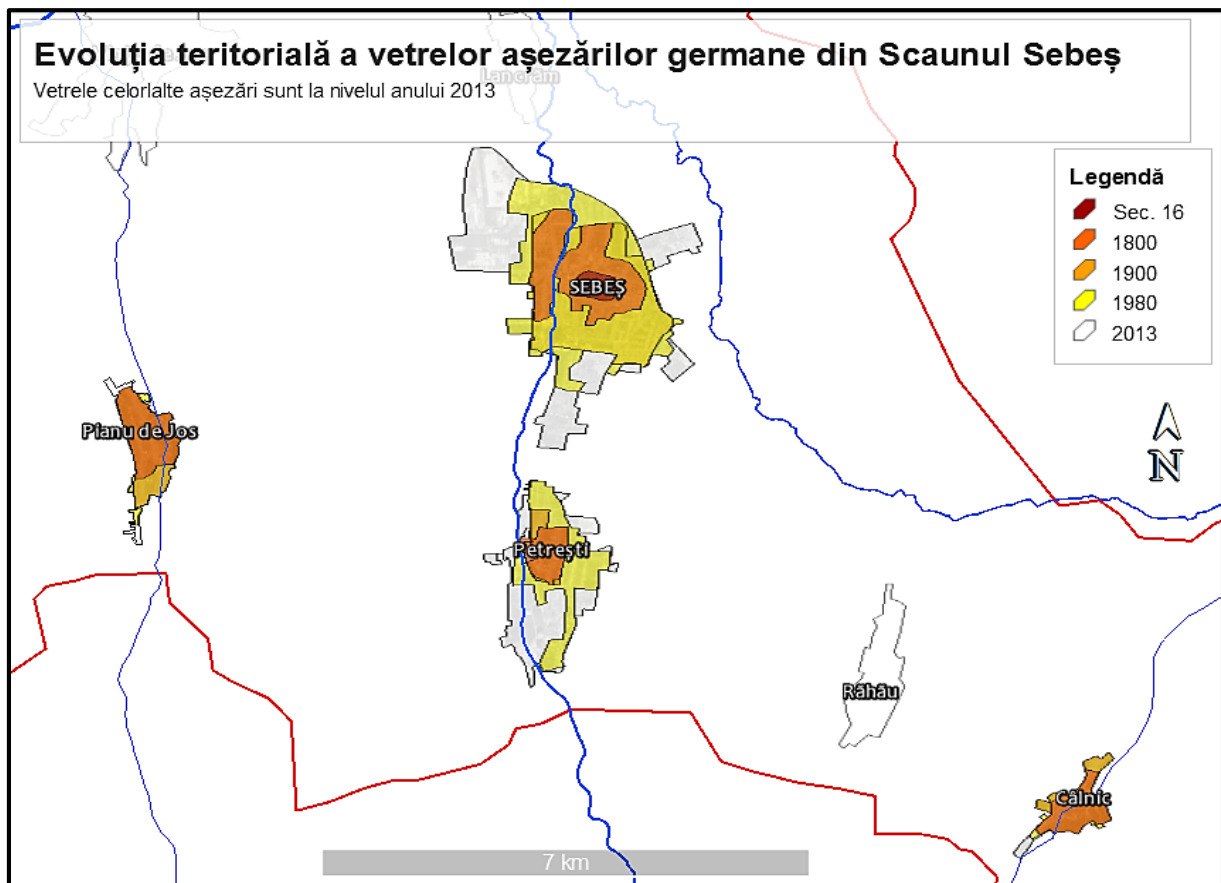
Territorial evolution of the German settlements in the former Saxon Seat Broos (Orăștie)

Sebeș. The early settlement occupied a former Szekler village and held a geometric structure, with the church at one end of a rectangular open space and two building lines on the long sides of it. Later, the free place was occupied by new buildings, leaving a square marketplace in the centre of the settlement, and the town was fortified with a somewhat oval defensive line of stone walls and towers. This form was preserved to the 17th century, when the town expands slowly outwards, incorporating the neighbouring Romanian village. The arrival

of new Austrian protestant colonists in the 18th century effects a northward expansion of the town. Later, new residential areas are established along the main entrance roads, giving the town its present-day shape.

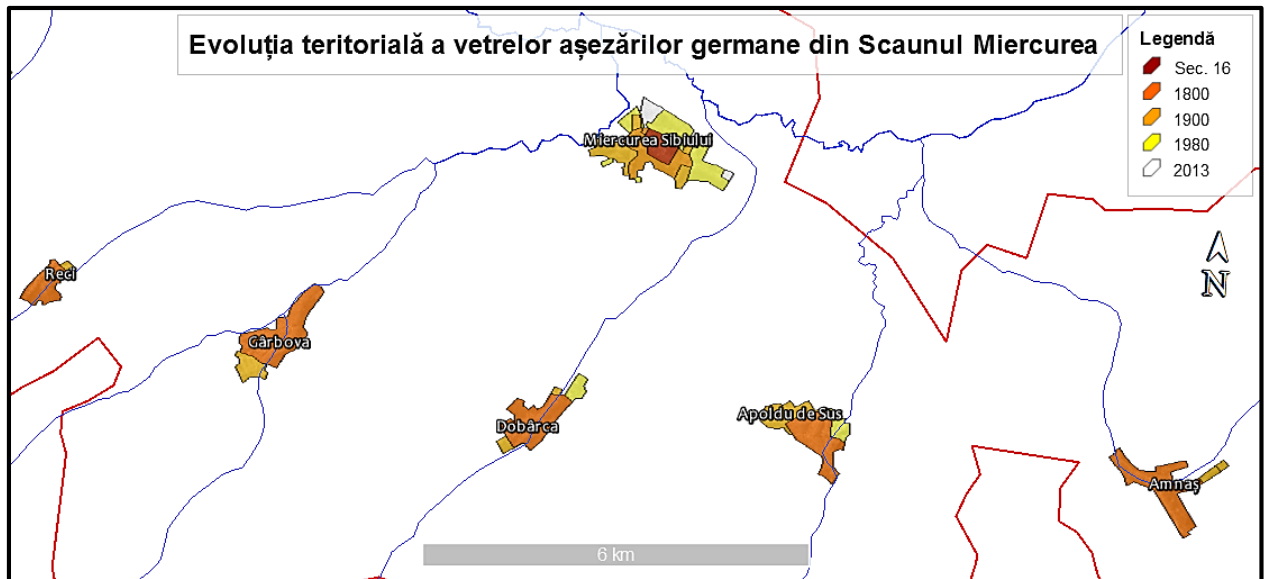
Petrești, south of Sebeș, owes its expansion during the 19th and 20th centuries to the paper factory which attracted workforce from the region, effecting a subsequent tripling of its area.

Miercurea Sibiului reveals a sectorial development, with consecutive additions to the initial square-shaped village around a central marketplace with the fortified church at one corner of the large open space. The construction of the railroad at the end of the 19th century effected the construction of the northern part of the settlement.



Territorial evolution of the German settlements in the former Saxon Seat Mühlbach (Sebeș)

The rest of the Saxon villages from Unterwald had a slow and modest territorial expansion after the initial founding of the settlements, being caused mainly by demographic growth, and the expansion was directed along the main road of the respective villages.



Territorial evolution of the German settlements in the former Saxon Seat Reußmarkt (Miercurea)

7. Functional characteristics (the economy)

7.1. Cultural-historical premises for economic development

The Saxon community was founded as a cooperative, and maintained its status until the 19th century. The land was common property, with each household having a similar piece of land. Meadows, pastures and forests were used at will. In the urban settlements, the guilds were at the heart of economic growth, craftsmanship being the main economic activity. It later developed into local industries, of which some reached national level.

7.2. Agriculture

Agriculture always represented the main occupation for most of Unterwald's inhabitants. The economically most valuable cultivation was viticulture, even if the region was not as renowned as the *Weinland* of Mediaș and Sighișoara. The main vineyards were those from Apoldu de sus (cca 150 hectares), Almaș, Câlnic, and Gârbova, in the eastern part of the region.

7.3. Establishment and development of craftsmanship

7.4. The guilds and their role in economic development

Craftsmanship was the driving power of economic development in the Saxon towns, spurred between the 14th and the 16th centuries by the so-called medieval agricultural crisis, when agricultural product prices dropped, and many peasant moved to the towns. The main role of the Saxon towns in Unterwald was at first that of local production and marketplace for their immediate hinterland.

The subsequent development of craftsmanship effected the foundation of guilds, in order to better defend their interests. In the 14th century, the first guilds are mentioned in Sebeș, and in 1376, a new charter is set by the guilds from Sibiu, Sebeș, Sighișoara and Orăștie. The wars in the 15th century will severely affect the economic development, and the Leopoldine Charter from 1691 will further impede craftsmanship. After the 1848 Revolution, the guilds enter a final stage.

7.5. Industrialisation and the development of traditional industries

In 1843, the Dahinten leather factory is founded in Sebeș, in the north-west of the old town. After 1925, the factory is refitted and employs more workers, being one of the town's major employers. The paper factory from Petrești was built in 1853 and constantly modernised during the next one and a half centuries. Both factories mentioned above were among the leading industries in the county of Alba in the year 1938.

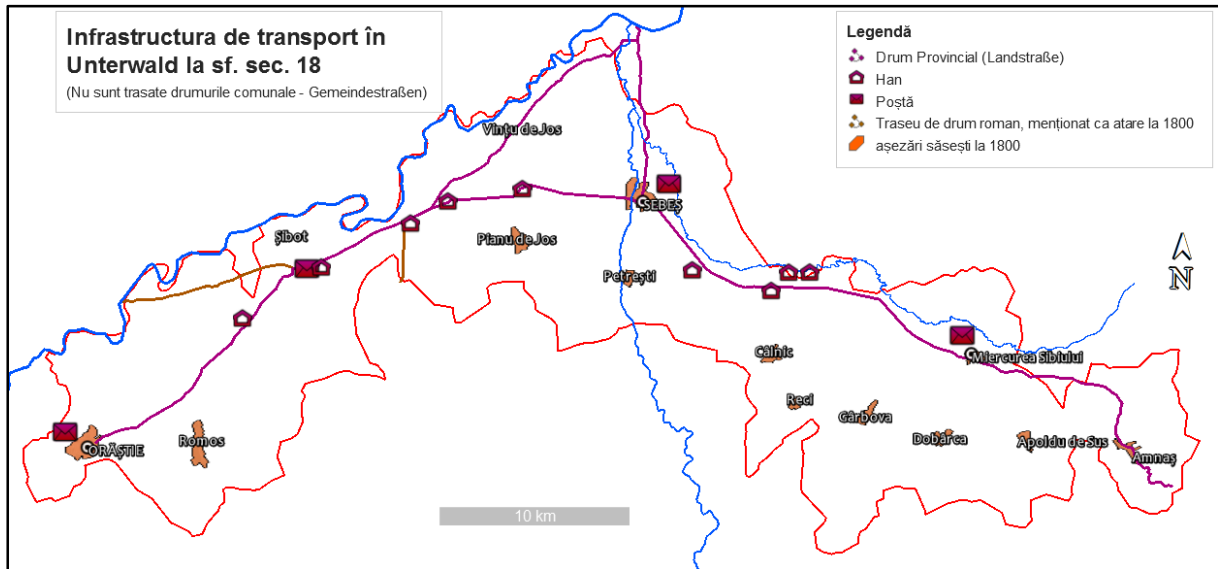
The eastern part of Unterwald remained widely agrarian, with no industry at the end of the 1930s.

7.5.1. The second industrialisation and planned economy

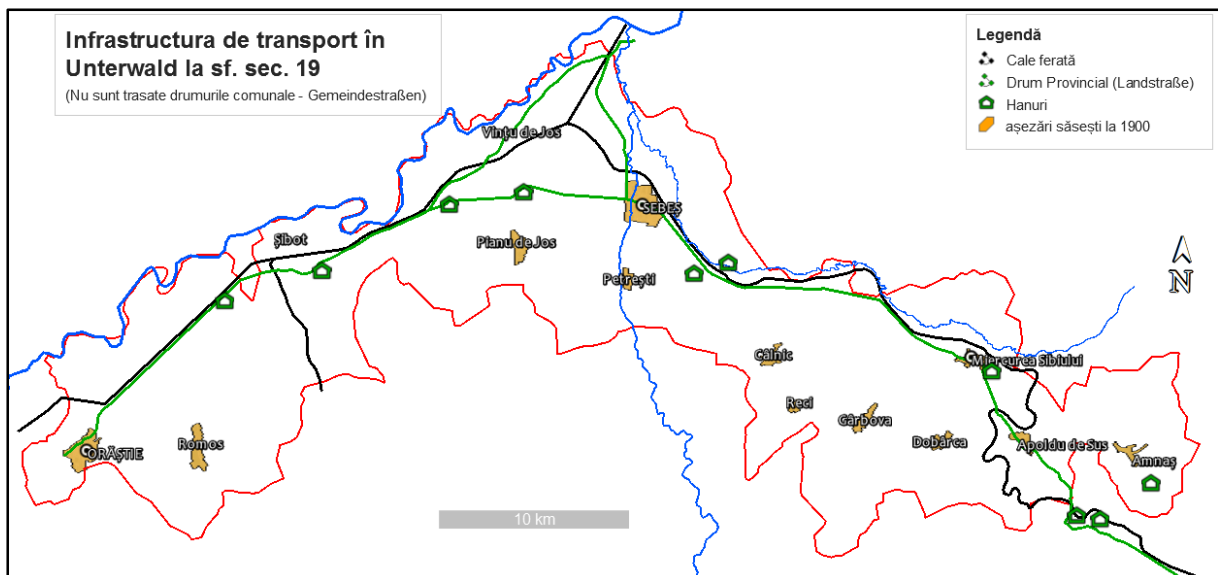
The main industrial centres during the second half of the 20th century remain the two towns of the region, Orăștie and Sebeș, followed by Petrești which keeps its monoindustrial profile. The new wood processing plant from Sebeș grows to a national industry, shaping the economic profile of the town during the communist period. The rest of the region keeps its agrarian profile, now under communist cooperatives, transforming former landowners in simple agricultural workers. The main agricultural centres of the region are Miercurea Sibiului, Apoldu de Sus, Călnic and Gâtbova.

7.6. Transport infrastructure

In the 19th century, the Austrian Monarchy unifies the road naming, establishing three major categories of roads: Reichsstraße (Imperial Road), owned and managed by the state; Landesstraße (Provincial Road), maintained by each province; and Gemeindestraße (Communal Road), maintained by each village or town.



Main transport infrastructure in Unterwald at the end of the 18th century

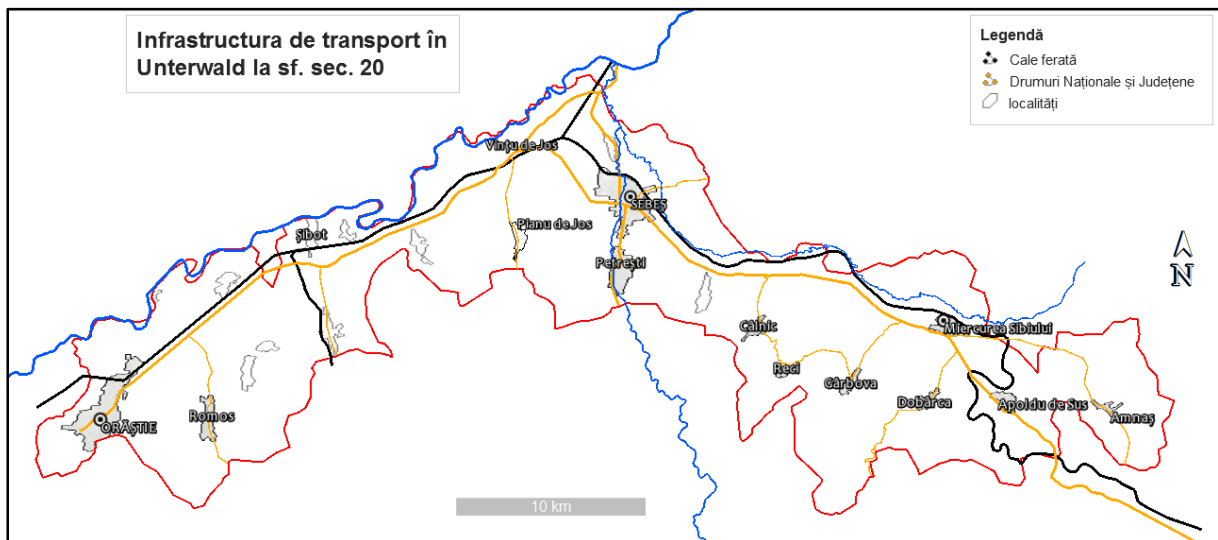


Main transport infrastructure in Unterwald at the end of the 19th century

In 1855, a new system of road building and maintenance is introduced, reevaluating the old provincial road and their routes. In Unterwald there were three such reroutings, leaving

three villages somewhat out the main routes (Romos, Apoldu de Jos, and Amnaș). Better road conditions, along with the construction of railroads crossing the region from west to east, ameliorate trade and economic conditions in the region.

During the 20th century, transport infrastructures keeps its former routes. Modernisation and maintenance decrease during the communist period, but a general upward trend is still traceable in road conditions, keeping up with the increased traffic.



Main transport infrastructure in Unterwald at the end of the 20th century

8. The influence of the German community on Romanian Space

The Transylvanian Saxons – including those from Unterwald – represent one of the most renowned brands of this historical province, together with the Saxon name „Siebenbürgen”. The influences of the economic activities and the lifestyle of the Saxons can be grouped into two major categories: material influences (economy, cultural landscape, planning, architecture, etc.) and cultural influences (arts, literature, mentalities, or lifestyle).

Unterwald is the birthplace of some notorious personalities in the fields of arts and sciences, such as Albert Amlacher, Georg Friedrich Marienburg, Franz Binder, Carl Filtsch, Theobald Streitfeld, Martin Bottesch, to name but a few).