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THE LAND OF FĂGĂRAȘ. REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY STUDY
Summary of the PhD thesis

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CONCLUSIONS

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Keywords: region, “land”, perception, mental space, system, regional specificity, regional development.

THE TOPIC AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The scientific proposal of this thesis coordinator, combined with the desire for knowledge, resulted in the acceptance of the research theme entitled “The Land of Făgăraș. Regional geography study”.

This paper is intended to be a regional geography study. The topic of the study is the Land of Făgăraș as regional system. Starting from this idea, this study aims to:

- first, define the Land of Făgăraș region, overlapping several criteria used by specialists in other fields, but also by introducing new criteria (mental, functional);
- highlight the defining features of the Land of Făgăraș territorial system;
- analyze the components of the region, outline the existing dysfunctions and provide solutions to reduce dysfunctions;
- conduct a diagnostic (SWOT) analysis of the region;
- identify territorial dynamics by means of the territorial development lines.

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL COORDINATES

The theoretical concepts used throughout this research are the region and the system region, the concept of “land”, “lands” as mental spaces and the perception of the geographical space.

The region has been addressed by well-known specialists in regional science under various forms, among which:

- “the system region, composed of contiguous spaces, dominated by the principle of unity” (Dauphiné, quoted by Cocean, 2010, p. 47).
- “a sustainable bimodular (natural and anthropogenic) territorial system, with several spatial situations, but also with an interference with the main modeling factor, the human” (Vallega, quoted by Cocean, 2010, p. 48).
- “an area characterized entirely by similar features of the territory, which also differ from those of the neighboring areas” (Fenneman, quoted by Cocean, 2010, p. 43).

The region as a territorial system - a concept which is located at the centre of our concerns and which formed the matrix that set the basis of this study - was also studied by Ianoș (2000), who believes that it is composed of elements and relationships, aiming to achieve common goals (p. 21).

The interpretation of the Romanian “lands” as territorial systems is not an element of scientific novelty, as these have been introduced in the literature and analyzed from the perspective of mental spaces by Cocean (1997), Cocean and Ciangă (1999-2000), Cocean (2008).

The “lands” as mental spaces are considered geographical areas perceived, imagined and lived that are superior to other types of mental spaces, due to the inhabitants’ strong attachment to the territory (Cocean, 2008, pp. 39-40; Cocean, 2010, pp. 61 -63).

The methodology employed took into account the principle of spatiality, causality, integration, and historicism (Cocean, 2010, pp. 153-156).

The data were analyzed and collected using several categories of methods, a scientific procedure known as “triangulation” (Grix, 2001, p. 84). Here are some examples of methods used in this research: document analysis, observation, historical method, survey, mapping method, chorematic method, regional method.

The survey, an important method used in this work, was carried out over three years (2012, 2013, 2014). The data collection tool was the semi-structured questionnaire. In total, 191 questionnaires were applied, of which 122 were validated and processed for the delimitation of the mental space of the region subjected to study.

It is important to mention that by means of the survey method, information were extracted regarding the residence, sex, occupation, level of education, hometown of the respondent, the town where the respondent grew up, the respondent's father's place of origin, the respondent's mother's place of origin.

The documentation sources used to study the Land of Făgăraș include references, archive sources, media sources, topographic maps, orthophotos, field observations, technical documentation, discussions and interviews with representatives of various institutions and with the local people, and photos.

CHAPTER 2. PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH OF THE REGION

The first works using the title of "Land of Făgăraș" belong to Densușianu (1885) and Pușcariu (1904). In the following decades, the region has been the research subject of numerous historians, as well as ethnographers, geographers and sociologists.

The historical aspects were addressed by Lukács (1996, 1999), Văjă (1979), Pușcariu (2006), Literat (1931), Prodan (1963), and Bunea (2010).

The ethnography was studied by Roșculeț (2002, 2006, 2010) and Meteș (1942), but also by Herseni (1997), Ionică (1996), Irimie (1956, 1957, 1958), Dunăre and Constantin (1968).

Malene (2009), Modorcea (2007) and Meteș (1930) have presented in details the issues related to church life and spirituality in the region.

From the geographical point of view, the Land of Făgăraș was investigated by Popescu (1990). Prodan (1970-1976) provides a collection of the region's urbaria, while Kideckel (2006, 2010) investigates the territorial system during the socialism.

The image of the region is completed also by the cartographic materials in the 16th-18th centuries and by the print and audiovisual media. A unique character is provided by the cinematographic works illustrating actions taking place in the Land of Făgăraș, such as the movie "Portrait of the Fighter as a Young Man" (2010).

CHAPTER 3. THE HISTORICAL INDIVIDUALIZATION AND THE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND OF FĂGĂRAȘ REGIONAL SYSTEM

The first documented mention of the Land of Făgăraș dates back to 1222, in a royal diploma (diploma of King Andrew the II of Hungary, confirming the donation made to the Teutonic Knights in the year 1211) (Lukács, 1999, p. 149).

Pascu (1971) informs us on the Land of Făgăraș, composed of "numerous and long-standing village communities along both sides of the Middle Olt River and especially on the left bank" (p. 35), whose resistance was materialized in the autonomous nature during the Middle Ages.

During the settlements of Szeklers and Transylvanian Saxons and later, in the 14th-16th centuries, the region was autonomous, being granted as feud to Wallachia (Papacostea 1993, pp. 77-78). The domination period of Wallachia over the Land of Făgăraș favored the maintenance of a strong autonomous character of the region and enabled the strengthening of the social structures and of some institutions that will last until the 19th century (Lukács, 2004, p. 62).

At the end of the 16th century, the region became the princely province of utmost importance in the Habsburg Empire. Under the given circumstances, the role of the Făgăraș Fortress was amplified and the building turned from a fortified feudal complex into a castle of Renaissance nobility (Marin, 1991, pp. 42-46).

Starting with the 17th century, the form of administrative-territorial organization of the Land of Făgăraș has been constantly changing, turning gradually into a district, part of the county, part of the counties and districts.

Currently (we refer to 2015), the analyzed region comprises 22 administrative-territorial units in Brașov County (of which 20 communes, 1 town and 1 municipality) and 7 administrative units in Sibiu County (of which 6 communes and 1 town).

CHAPTER 4. THE INDIVIDUALIZATION OF THE REGIONAL SYSTEM BASED ON ETHNOGRAPHIC AND MENTAL CRITERIA

The regional system addressed in this research comprises two ethnographic entities: the Land of Făgăraș (with the Avrig, Făgăraș and Perșani sub-areas) (Irimie, 1956, pp. 5-6) and the Târnavelor Plateau (with the Târnavă Mare and Târnavă Mică subareas) (Dunăre and Constantin 1968, pp. 17-19). The analyzed regional system overlaps the Land of Făgăraș completely and the Târnavă Mare subarea partially.

From the architectural point of view, the common element of the two ethnographic entities (the Land of Făgăraș and the Târnavelor Plateau - Târnavă Mare subarea) is the closed house, with reinforced enclosure. This type is preserved in all administrative-territorial units in the Land of Făgăraș and especially in those located with the short side towards the road (we refer to the European road E68 and the county road 104), as well as in the administrative units Cincu, Șoarș, Ticușu and to a lesser extent in Ungra and Hoghiz.

Shepherding needs to be mentioned among the representative traditional occupations. As regards the shepherding in the Land of Făgăraș, it has been practiced since ancient times, and during the 17th and 19th centuries as transhumance (Popescu, quoted by Popa, 2004, p. 183).

The traditional crafts specific to the Land of Făgăraș ethnographic area include pottery, glass painting, weaving, furriery, the last two being specific also to the Târnavă Mare area.

The region of study is distinguished by very old traditions and customs, among which the best-known tradition is that of the young men gangs from the Land of Făgăraș. Other customs are preserved and are now agropastoral (“the harvesters’ wreath, “the ploughman”, “the wheel in flames”) and religious (the wedding wishes, “the dead man’s apple”) traditions of the ethnographic Land of Făgăraș, as well as the “bees” in the Târnavelor Plateau.

The female folk costume has the following characteristic elements: wristband shirts, Romanian blouse with shoulder embroidery (in Avrig area), Romanian blouse with ribbons and crinkles (Făgăraș area), Romanian blouse with crinkles (Perșani area) and the Romanian blouse with shoulder loomed embroidery (the Târnavelor Plateau), the aprons (in the Avrig and Făgăraș areas) and the Romanian peasant homespun skirt (in the Perșani and Târnavelor Plateau area) (Irimie, 1956, 1957, 1958; Dunăre and Constantin, 1968).

The kerchief (vălitoarea) and the peasant head dress (pomeselne) are used as head coverings in all these areas.

The male folk costume is pretty homogeneous in all the subareas in terms of the shirt, which can be wide-sleeved, with wristband and cuffs called “bențe”, in terms of the tight trousers and the floral embroidered closed vest (Irimie, 1956, 1957, 1958; Dunăre și Constantin, 1968).

The investigation of the mental space from the Land of Făgăraș was conducted by application of 191 questionnaires. These were quantified and analyzed using the SPSS program (version 22).

This subchapter presents the research findings on the sense of “belonging to the region”, familiarity of inhabitants in relation to the phrase “Land of Făgăraș”, perception of

respondents regarding the spatial extension of the Land of Făgăraș and the way the respondents call the region they live in. Another aspect addressed in the study was the highlight of the character traits assumed by the inhabitants of the region and their classification in a behavioral pattern.

The variables chosen were the place of residence (the administrative-territorial unit where the respondent lives), sex, occupation and level of education, hometown of the respondent, the town where the respondent grew up, the respondent's father's place of origin, the respondent's mother's place of origin.

The results of the field survey revealed that all respondents (100%) have heard of the "Land of Făgăraș" and 86% declared that they considered themselves inhabitants of this region. In terms of places of residence, urban residents (94%) have a more developed sense of identity than the inhabitants of the village (83%). Those who were born in the region (91%) said that they considered themselves more attached to it than those who were born outside the region (69%). The feeling of belonging to the regional space is more apparent in case of villagers in the communes of Arpașu de Jos, Beclean, Drăguș, Făgăraș, Hârseni, Lisa, Porumbacu de Jos, Recea, Sâmbăta de Sus, Șercaia, Șinca, Șinca Nouă, Viștea, Voila, Mândra, Părau, Cârța, Cârțișoara, Ticușu, Ucea and the town of Victoria. The arguments they bring are ethnographic (in the communes Sâmbăta de Sus, Cârța, Cârțișoara, Părau, Porumbacu de Jos, Șercaia, Șinca Nouă, Ticușu, Ucea and the town of Victoria), landscape-related (the location in the Făgăraș Depression, proximity to the mountain area), economic (the attraction exerted by the town of Făgăraș, where the people go on certain occasions, including for the celebration of historical events).

Of all the respondents, 56% (68 persons) were convinced that the region should be called the Land of Făgăraș, 6% (7 persons) were convinced that the region should be called the Land of Olt and 35% (43 persons) expressed their confidence that both names were suitable for the analyzed region.

The reasons the respondents chose the name of Land of Făgăraș include: the role of polarizing center played by the town of Făgăraș in the analyzed region - "The region I belong to is called the Land of Făgăraș because the settlements are located around Făgăraș" (man, 42, high school education, Șinca), the association with the natural components, for example the Făgăraș Depression - "It is called the Land of Făgăraș because it is one of the largest and better individualized contact depressions of Transylvania". Other reasons are the spatial location of the Land of Făgăraș which is different from that of the Land of Olt and the confusions generated by the use of the latter name - "It's what they say; it's what I've heard. We know that Oltenia is over the mountains" (woman, 72, arts and crafts education, Mândra). The name "the Land of Olt" was most often chosen because of the association with the major water course in the region - the Olt River - "We can call it the Land of Olt because the Olt River crosses the region" (man, 74 years old, secondary education, Recea).

When asked about the psychosocial profile and the character of the inhabitants of the analyzed region, the respondents answered that the inhabitants of the Land of Făgăraș are hardworking people (38%). They are also considered generous (6%), jovial (7%), honest (6%), yet proud (8%). Other features mentioned were ambition, intelligence, traditionalism, beauty, respect, selfishness, indolence.

CHAPTER 5. THE NATURAL COMPONENT SUPPORTING THE REGIONAL SYSTEM

The analyzed territory summarizes the lithological interference resulting from the association of three different tectonic units: the crystalline-Mesozoic or Central – Eastern – Carpathian area, the Supragetic units and the Transylvanian Plateau or the Transylvanian Basin. The natural resources found in the basement of the region are:

1) Useful mineral substances (Ministerul Geologiei, Institutul de Geologie și Geofizică, 1983, foaia numărul 8)

- metalliferous: accumulations of lead - zinc (gold and silver interferences) from Porumbacu, Arpaș, Nimaia, Bârsa Fierului (showing also pyrite interferences) and from Vulcănița - Gherdana.

- non- metalliferous: the kyanite, pyrophyllite accumulation from Cocoricu-Moașa.

- caustobiolite: the eutrophic peat accumulation from Mândra - Șercaia.

2) Materials resources for constructions (Mihailescu and Grigore, 1981):

- sedimentary rocks: sandstone, clay, limestone, dolomite, ballast, sand reservoirs and gravel (pg. 74-85, 299-306).

- metamorphic rocks: marble resources (pg. 299-306).

- igneous rocks: basalt, dacite tuff (pg. 74-85).

Among the geological resources, the building material resources are diverse and regionally important. These are used only for local needs. An example of good practice is the cement production industrial unit located in the region, which belongs to the Lafarge Company.

The individuality of the analyzed territory derives from the combination of the following major morphostructural units:

The Southern Carpathians (the group of the Făgăraș Mountains)

- the Făgăraș Massif (or the Făgăraș Mountains per se)

- the Țaga or Țagla Mountains

The Eastern Carpathians (the southern group)

- The Central Perșani Mountains, also called the Cetății Mountains.

- The Southern Perșani Mountains (also called the Codlei Mountains)

- The Șinca Depression

- The Vlădeni Depression

The Transilvanian Subcarpathians

The regional analyzed system overlaps a very limited segment of the Homoroadelor Subcarpathians

The Transylvanian Depression

The Hârtibaciului de Sud Plateau:

- the Ticușului hills (the region occupies the Ticușului Hills, except a narrow segment in the north), the Rodbavului Hills/the Rodbavului Plateau (except a limited segment in the North-West), the Cincului Hills/the Cincului Plateau (the southern-eastern part), the Făgetului Hills/the Făgetului Crest (the Southern part)

- the Făgăraș Depression (is almost entirely included, except for small segments in the north - east and south - west of the basin).

The relief of the analyzed region is presented as a physical support of the physico-geographical components (water system, biogeographic component, the pedological component) and anthropogenic (the township network, the communication network) and has a great esthetic value, causing regional particularities.

The permanent settlements (101 in total) are located at an average altitude between 377 and 662 m. Most municipalities, representing 65.3%, preferred to locate their residential areas at medium altitudes in the Făgăraș Piedmont Plain, followed by the Ticușului Plateau, Cincului Plateau and Rodbavului Plateau. This behavior can be explained by the favorability of the Piedmont Plain to dwelling.

In terms of gradient, the slope intervals ranging between 0 - 2 ° and 2.1 - 5° are representative for this region, which gathers the largest number of settlements, 65.

The relief of the Land of Făgăraș represents an attractive tourism resource due to the landscape value of the existing landforms (in the mountainous area) and due to the relief

types in terms of genesis and to the associated landforms and micro-relief forms (the glacial relief) (Cocean and Dezsi 2009 , p. 53).

The tourist attractions belong to the glacial relief (mountain ridges, mountain peaks, glacial cirques and glacial valleys on the northern slope of the Făgăraș Massif). In addition to these, the island-like massifs, the relief developed on volcanic rocks, basalts and limestones, dolomites and conglomerates are secondary attractions.

In terms of climate, the regional system is characterized by average annual temperatures around 9°C in Făgăraș, and 2° C in Bâlea Lac, average yearly rainfall amount of 638.5 mm in the lower part of the region and 1451 mm in the high area, average snow thickness between 0.6 and 4 cm in the depression and between 2.5 and 234.3 cm in the mountains, movement of air masses mostly north-western and north-eastern, influences of foehn on the northern slope of the Făgăraș Massif (the big wind), extreme weather events such as thunderstorms at an average frequency of more than 36 days/year and the type of ice deposits which occur on average 34.3 days/year in the mountainous area and 8.7 days/year in the lowland and hilly area.

The water resources belong entirely to the Olt basin and consist of surface and underground resources.

The multiannual average flows during the 2005 - 2010 period range from 97.15 m³/s for Olt River at the Sebeș hydrometric station, to 0.19 m³/s for Felmer River (right-bank tributary of the Olt River) at the Felmer hydrometric station. The maximum annual river flows reach 86 m³/s for the Olt River at the Hoghiz hydrometric station and 131 m³/s on the Olt River, when it leaves the area of the analyzed region. For the other tributaries of the Olt River, the maximum annual flows did not exceed 6 m³/s in 2005. The lowest minimum annual rate, of less than 1 m³/s, were recorded at the hydrometric stations Felmer (Felmer River, 0.05 m³/s in 2007), Arpașu de Sus (Arpășel River, 0.68 m³/s in 2008), Noul Român (Pârâul Nou, 0.63 m³/s in 2007).

The hydropower facilities on the Olt River are Voila, Vista, Arpaș, Scorei and Avrig, with an installed capacity of 14.2 MW (Hidroconstrucția SA; Hidroelectrică, 2011).

The lakes in the Land of Făgăraș are divided into two categories, according to their genesis: natural and artificial lakes (reservoirs). The glacial lakes were developed in the Făgăraș Mountains, respectively Urlea, Podragu, Podrăgel, Doamnei, Avrig, Bâlea (Ministerul Mediului și Dezvoltării Durabile and Administrația Națională Apele Române, 2008, p. 54).

The salted mineral waters are characteristic for the analyzed region. The salted mineral waters are used in the Băile Rodbav resort, which is currently (2012) in the administration of the Codlea prison (representative of the Șoarș city hall, July 5th, 2012) and in the Băile Perșani resort, which provides accommodation services and treatment facilities. The waters in Băile Rodbav are recommended for the treatment of “diseases of the locomotor system, double-jointedness and capsular ligament instability and muscle - joint instability in children, poor adaptation to thermal contrasts, functional female genital disorders related to nervous system hyperactivity, prepuberal conditions in hyperactive children, activities conducted under cold and wet conditions, activities that require a prolonged orthostatic posture, favoring static muscle stresses, inactivity, obesity, micro-traumas by pneumatic tools” (Berlescu 1982, pp. 265-266).

The groundwater bodies that are located within the limits of the study area are represented by the groundwater body of Făgăraș Depression and by the groundwater body of Perșani Mountains.

The Făgăraș Depression water body is of the porous type and is located on the left bank of the Olt River. The flow ranges between 1 l/s/m and 20 l/s/m and the water body is supplied by rainfall.

Regarding the Perșani Mountains water body, this is of the fissure - karst type and it is supplied by rainfall and snow, while the groundwater is discharged into the Olt Valley and its flow reaches 10-20 l/s, being used as source of drinking water for the population (Planul de Management al Bazinului Hidrografic Olt, p. 87).

CHAPTER 6. THE GEODEMOGRAPHIC AND HABITAT-RELATED COMPONENT OF THE LAND OF FĂGĂRAȘ

During the temporal interval 1990 – 2009, the population of the regional system decreased by -8.7% (12,078 people). During the same period, two intervals with a positive growth rate (1996 - 1998, 2002 - 2004) and six intervals with population decrease (1990 - 1992, 1994 - 1996, 1998 - 2000, 2000 - 2002, 2004 - 2006, 2006 -2009) were highlighted.

The overall average density decreased between 1990 - 2009, both at regional level, from 132.4 inhabitants/km² to 103.7 inhabitants/km², as well as by residential areas, due to the decrease of the number of inhabitants. In urban areas, the overall average density is 805.8 inhabitants/km² (values calculated for 2009), while in the rural area it has much lower values, of 25 inhabitants/km².

The average birth rate for the Land of Făgăraș, for the period 1999 -2009 is 12 ‰. Regarding the average mortality rate at regional level, high values were recorded in 1999, 2000 and 2003 (just over 15‰). The average immigration rate for each locality is positive for the period 1999 - 2009. The average emigration rate has experienced periods of decline and growth, ranging from 12.8‰ to 16.5‰.

Highlighting the structure by sex was performed by calculating the femininity index for the years 2003 and 2013. At regional level, the average femininity index has very similar values. In 2003 a value of 101.7% was recorded, while in 2013 it has a share of 99.8%.

In the Land of Făgăraș there is an average demographic aging index of 78% (2013), the highest values being recorded in rural areas (80.1%) compared to urban areas, where values of 60.5% are recorded.

The demographic dependency ratio is as follows: at regional level, it has average values of 66.2%, while between the two residential areas, the recorded values are higher in rural areas (68.6%), all calculated for the year 2013.

In terms of ethnic structure, in all administrative - territorial units, the Romanian population is in majority. The administrative units with more than 90% Romanians are Arpașu de Jos (91%), Cârțișoara (96.3%), Drăguș (98.3%), Hârseni (91.9%), Mândra (91.9%), Racoviță (97.7%), Recea (91.9%), Sâmbăta de Sus (92.2%), Șinca (90.2%), Șinca Nouă (97.3%), Turnu Roșu (96.8%), Ucea (94.5%) and Victoria (93.5%).

In 2011, people of Orthodox confession represented 89.2% in the Land of Făgăraș (average values), followed by Adventist persons (1%) and Reformed confession (0.9%). Lower average values are specific to Pentecostal (0.7%) and Greek - Catholic (0.7%) religions.

The residential areas of the settlements in the region have a regular shape (specific to the settlements with German population) or irregular (this category is the majority at regional level).

According to texture, settlements are simple linear, linear tentacular and complex (as the town of Făgăraș). The structure dictates the appearance of residential areas, while at regional level, the residential areas are gathered, largely as a result of physical and geographical conditions (with reduced slope of the lands in the depression) and the mentality of resident populations.

In the Land of Făgăraș, most (72) of the 101 settlements belong to class V, which represents 71.3% of the existing settlements, class IV is assigned to 26 localities in the Land of Făgăraș, commune centers constitute 25.7% of the total number of settlements in this geographical area. The towns Victoria and Avrig belong to class III. The only class II settlement in the Land of Făgăraș is Făgăraș municipality, with a population of 36,555 inhabitants in the year 2013.

In the analyzed region there are 211 historical monuments (according to Lista Monumentelor Istorice, 2010), of which 97 are included in category A, with national and universal cultural value, and 114 are included in category B with a local cultural value. By their nature, built heritage assets are classified into archeological monuments (47), architectural monuments (153), public monuments (3), memorial and funeral monuments (8). Among the monuments that are architecturally significant, 72 have national and universal cultural value, and 81 are only of local importance.

The built heritage monuments of the Land of Făgăraș dates from: Neolithic, Bronze Age, the Middle Bronze Age, Hallstatt, Latène, the pre - Roman age, the post – Roman age, the early Middle Ages, the classical Middle Ages, the modern and contemporary era. The built heritage dating back to the medieval times, for example the Castle – Fortress of Făgăraș (first documented in the 14th – 18th centuries) has a special symbolic value.

CHAPTER 7. THE ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENT OF THE LAND OF FĂGĂRAȘ

Adapted to the relief, soils, and climate conditions, the agriculture in the Land of Făgăraș met the favorable conditions for the cultivation of plants and for stock farming, the depression residential area being the main area of economic development. The analysis of the agricultural potential was conducted by appealing to the data centralized by the General Agricultural Census of 2010 (Recensământul General Agricol, 2010), which provides greater accuracy than the data recorded annually by the National Institute of Statistics.

The agricultural use of the region emerges also from the higher percentage recorded for the agricultural land, prevailing in the administrative - territorial units of Arpașu de Jos, Avrig, Beclean, Cârța, Lisa, Porumbacu de Jos, Ticușu, Ungra and Voila, where the higher suitability of lands in the meadow and hilly areas is decisive.

As regards the plant culture, the highest values of cultivated areas are recorded by cereals (wheat, corn), distributed predominantly in the meadow and terrace areas (Lisa, Mândra, Recea, Viștea, Voila, Șercaia, Porumbacu de Jos, Avrig). Industrial plants (flax, hemp, sunflower, sugar beet) meet the cultivation conditions Beclean, Viștea, Voila, Avrig and Cârța, while the rest of the area is cultivated mainly with other cultures. The areas cultivated with other arable land crops (potatoes, vegetables) are also extended, the long-established administrative-territorial units cultivating them being Voila, Porumbacu de Jos, Avrig, Sâmbăta de Sus, Mândra, Lisa, Hârșeni.

The second sub-branch of agriculture – stock farming – is also developed in the Land of Făgăraș, with a long-established tradition of shepherding in the communes of Cincu (9,495 head), Comăna (11,075 heads), Hoghiz (10,724 heads), Șoarș (17,007 heads), Ticușu (10,203 heads), Ungra (8,519 head), Voila (8,520 head), Avrig (8,247 head). Pigs represent the largest herd population, especially in Hoghiz, Lisa, Șercaia, Ungra, Avrig, Porumbacu de Jos. Another category of representative animals for the Land of Făgăraș is the equine, followed by bovine animals, with significant values in the following administrative - territorial units: Comăna, Hoghiz, Părău, Șercaia, Ticușu, Ungra, Voila, while horses are particularly found in the communes of Porumbacu de Jos, Comăna, Șoarș, Ungra, Racoviță, but also of the town of Avrig.

The industry of the Land of Făgăraș is currently concentrated (2011) in the towns of Avrig, Făgăraș and Victoria and in the communes Șercaia, Hoghiz and Ucea.

As they polarize the adjacent rural localities, the industrial units in the urban areas of Făgăraș, Victoria and Avrig, excelled in the industrial sub-sectors dedicated to the chemical, machine building, textile (as this has continued naturally from the medieval crafts) and food industry.

A proof of the social and economic prosperity of the towns in Făgăraș during the socialist period is confirmed by the locals who claimed that “It was quiet, there were no problems. And we did not, as they say, worry for tomorrow” (man, 77 years old, high school education, Făgăraș). “What can I say, it was an important industrial city. Thousands of people had jobs here. The industrial plant had about 12,000-13,000 employees.” (woman, 72 year old, vocational school, Făgăraș), “I grew up in this Făgăraș whose industry was flourishing. The large industrial plant, the chemical plant ... extraordinary. Anyway, I remember feverishly how much traffic was in the city. It was formidable. This was something the city would never see again” (man, 60, university education, Făgăraș).

The last decades have imposed an economic restructuring that led to the existence of extensive partially abandoned industrial areas or which were used to reduced capacity. To highlight the current situation, 3 case studies were selected in the representative industrial areas in the Land of Făgăraș (heavy industry): the Făgăraș, Avrig and Victoria industrial sites.

Created from the legislative point of view to encourage entrepreneurship (tax reductions for investors), the industrial parks in Romania have attracted the attention of major international companies, contributing to the economic development of that territory. The Land of Făgăraș makes no exception, with the two industrial parks approved by the Association of Industrial, Technological, Scientific Parks and Business Incubators in Romania, i.e. the Făgăraș Industrial Park (with an area of 10,017 ha), operational and managed by SC Nitroparc S.R.L. and the Victoria Industrial Park (with an area of 5.5 ha) which are listed as “under construction” (Ministerul Economiei, Comerțului și Turismului, f.d.).

The tourism potential of the region is special and is made up of existing landforms, rivers and natural lakes, natural protected areas and built heritage. Tourist accommodation facilities are present in the territorial administrative units Avrig, Șinca, Sâmbăta de Sus, Hoghiz, in the towns of Victoria and Făgăraș, but also in the Cârța - Cârțișoara area.

While the inns/motels define the urban areas, the agro-hostels define the mountainous administrative areas (Avrig, Hoghiz, Făgăraș), where spectacular landscape determined the local initiation of tourist activities.

In terms of railway infrastructure, the Land of Făgăraș is crossed by the tap line 200 (Brașov - Podu Olt – Sibiu - Vințu de Jos – Simeria – Arad - Curtici). The daily railway traffic includes 23 trains, of which 11 are Interregio trains, accounting for 47.8% of the total and 12 are regio trains (52.2%).

The total length of roads in this area is 684.0 km, with a medium density of 23.9 km/1,000 km. Most of this (342.9 km) belongs to the category of county roads, which account for 50.1% of the total, while local roads account for 29.0% (198.2 km), while the national highways gather 20,9% (142.9 km).

Of the 142.9 kilometers of national roads across the region, 95.9% (137.0 km) are covered with asphalt concrete, while the remaining 5.9 km are causeways. Regarding their sustainability, the majority (118 km), i.e. 82.5% of the total are in a good condition, while 8.8 kilometers (6.2%) are roads with an average viability and 16.2 km (11.3% of the total) belong to the category of bad roads.

The drinking water distribution network in the Land of Făgăraș has a total length of 592.7 km (2013), the urban area accounting for 149.1 km (21.2%) and the rural area for

443.6 kilometers (78.8%). On average, each inhabitant has 4.87 m of drinking water supply network, much higher in the rural areas (7.12 m) compared to urban areas (only 2.51 m).

The sewerage system in the Land of Făgăraș is undersized. The 207.1 km are present in only 8 of the 29 administrative-territorial units. Thus, 72.4% of the communes in the analyzed area do not have sewerage network. Related to the total population (121,497 in 2013), the overall density of the sewerage network is only 1.7 m/capita (2.8 m/capita in the urban areas and 0.7 m/capita in the rural areas).

The methane gas distribution network in the Land of Făgăraș has a total length of 465.8 km, of which 19.9% in urban areas (93 km) and 80.1% in rural areas (372.8 km). On average, each inhabitant of this area is allotted 3.83 m of methane gas distribution pipe (1.56 m/capita in urban areas and 5.98 m/capita in rural areas). It should be noted that the town of Avrig does not appear in any statistics with any kilometer of methane gas distribution network, although the same statistics record the gas consumption in the above-mentioned administrative-territorial unit.

CONCLUSIONS

The Land of Făgăraș is a functional regional system, a statement resulting from the analysis of existing resources and their exploitation.

The strengths are represented by the existence of geological resources used as building materials, very good operating conditions and transport for magmatic rocks (basalt, dacitic tuff) and sedimentary rocks (ballast, limestone); natural tourism potential, high landscape value of the mountainous relief, glacial relief, mountain peaks with altitudes above 2000 m, favorable climate for winter sports and activities specific to winter (ice hotel at Bâlea Lac) protected areas of particular European interest, high biodiversity, diversity and uniqueness of elements of built heritage, traditional crafts, very old traditions and customs, particularly valued during fairs and festivals, old tradition of raising bovines. To these are added: the long-established chemical industry tradition; the location of the regional system in the center of the Land, halfway between two urban centers of extra-regional significance and the possibility of accessing them through the road and rail communication lines, higher connectivity with neighboring regions, central Transylvania, and Muntenia, availability of road transport routes tourism importance (the Transfăgărașan), Land of Făgăraș inhabitant regional identity based on landscape, historical, economic and social criteria; the availability of human resources are characterized by diligence, cheerfulness, honesty and ambition.

The dysfunctions are caused by poor promotion of the existing resources, the lack of a coherent strategy based on the brand of the Land, geomorphic and hydrological risks (swamps), the anthropogenic impact on the landscape and natural protected areas, as well as the dysfunctions of the aquatic ecosystems (mountain rivers) through the construction of small hydropower plants, poor management of groundwater resources, decrease of the total population at regional level, between 1990-2009, the decrease of young population at regional level, between 2003-2013 interval, the existence of “brownfield sites”, the lack of concrete conversion measures and lack of industry in general, low viability of country side roads, lack of projects intended for the road and rail infrastructure; alternative regional identity that can generate confusion regarding the inhabitant identity of other geographic areas (such as Oltenia).

The core of the Land of Făgăraș demonstrates that all information vectors converge towards the depression area due to the major gravity axis represented by the 68 European road/ the 1st national road highway and the tap line 200, doubled by the hydrographic artery of the Olt river, between Bradu and Făgăraș settlements.

The centers that polarize the Land of Făgăraș are located outside the regional system (composed of the Sibiu and Brașov municipalities, polarizing centers of the first rank and town of Rupea, polarizing center of the third rank) and inside the regional system, namely the town of Făgăraș, polarizing center of the second rank and towns of Avrig and Victoria, of the third rank. The polarizing centers of the fourth rank are important in Cincu, Hoghiz, Șercaia, Porumbacu de Jos, Ucea de Jos, Turnu Roșu and the fifth rank centers is Sâmbăta climatic resort.

The polarizing centers of the first rank located outside the regional system are accessed due to their social (for shopping, cultural activities, medical services, recreational and sports services) and less economic functions.

The towns of Făgăraș, Victoria and Avrig are the areas characterized by a positive tropism, due to the economic function that belongs to the secondary and tertiary sector and to the existing cultural attractions.

The communes Șoarș and Ticușu can be considered areas characterized by a negative tropism, due to its poor connectivity to the southern areas (localities on the left bank of the Olt River), a damaged housing stock, a massive depopulation in the '90s, poor urban facilities and to the poor economic function.

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