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THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF A RURAL SETTLEMENT FROM EIGHTEENTH TO THE BEGINNING OF TWENTIETH CENTURY: CLASS AND ETHNICITY IN THE MODERN ERA

a. Introduction

In this paper I address the social history of an ethnically mix rural area in the eighteens and nineteenth centuries Eastern Hungary. I intend to survey the interplay of class and ethnicity in a village shared by Germans, Romanians and Gypsies in order to illustrate the birth of modern peasants in the Central European context.

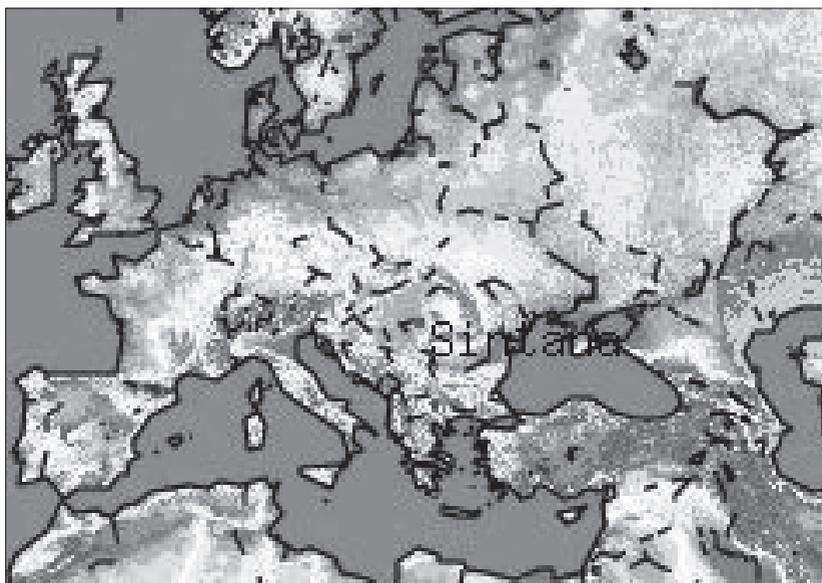
I begin by introducing the place and its environment. Specific data regarding village history are unfortunately scarce and fragmentary. In the following pages I offer an overview of the regional and statewide data and trends, a background upon which I will place (and make sense of) the few local data available. While the following pages consist in the interplay of micro- and macro-history, it is worth remembering that these dynamics only loosely correlated: while local events are, in long term, influenced developments described by the macro-history, I encounter instances proving that what happened with the villagers did not necessarily follow the statewide trend, and conversely, that local dynamics produced lasting effects (local riots, for example) during benign state-wide circumstances. I begin by introducing the place.

Although Sântana consists in a compactly inhabited area, history and local knowledge divides it in two villages and (at least) three ethnic communities: Sanktanna, populated almost exclusively by Romanian Germans (Schwabens), and Comlăuș, an ethnically mix village hosting an almost equal number of ethnic Romanians and Germans, besides a sizable Gipsy community.

After the creation of the German settlement, names changed: as these two villages were geographically contiguous, they were constantly treated as a bi-nuclear unit, as suggested by the usage of the same name for them (“Old-” and “New Sanktanna”)¹ in all administrative documents. Nevertheless, it is only in 1951 that the two villages were merged by the Romanian communist state into a single, larger rural unit, named Sântana.² Since 2003 Sântana earned urban status, being currently classified as town.

b. The site and its geographic and ecologic characteristics

Sântana³ is located about 25 km East of the Hungarian-Romanian border and 20 km North-East of the city of Arad. See *Map 1* and *Map 2* for the location of the site:



Map1. Location of Sântana in Europe

Source: Copyright © Falling Rain Genomics, Inc. 1996-2004:
<http://www.fallingrain.com/world/RO/0/Sintana.html>,
accessed on December 7, 2007.



Map 2. Location of Sântana within the borders of the three historical provinces of the Habsburg Empire, around the 1750's

The town is located near the Eastern limits of the great Pannonia plain, which ends at the foot of the hills of Occidental Carpathians - less than 30 kilometers to the East of Sântana. The flatness of the plain and the richness of the agricultural soil are the dominant ecological characteristics of the area: it shares very much the same characteristics with the Banat region (from which it is separated by the Mureș river) and with the Eastern Hungarian plain (by which is separated by the post WWI border-line between Hungary and Romania). Although this region is sometimes considered a part of Transylvania, it is separated by it by the sub-Carpathian hills. There is a major ecological difference between the high, mountain-surrounded Transylvanian plateau and the plain where Sântana is located.

Agriculture was always a large part of what people did for living here, as the fields surrounding the village are of very high agricultural quality: 65% of Sântana's arable lands are classified today as belonging to the best type of soil (the agro-productive category number 1); 34% of them belong to the second quality (the agro-productive category number 2);

only 1% is assigned to the third category. By comparison, in leud, the Transylvanian village studied by Kligman (1988) most of the agricultural land belongs to the 5th agro-productive category. While there are no rivers or lakes in the area, the underground water is relatively easily accessible through wells.

The landscape of today is the product of relative modern developments. Maps and documents from sixteenth century indicate that the area where Sântana (then called Komlós) stood was covered in forests, lakes and wetlands.⁴ During the eighteenth century constant efforts of de-forestation and clearing out the swamps transformed the area into the Pannonia plain of today. Successful deforestation allowed for a switch from cattle rearing towards agriculture (mainly for wheat, corn and other cereals). As of today, there are no traces of the huge forests of the past, except the couple of hectares of the so-called Tokács forest, 7 km West of Sântana.

c. An overview on the regional history: from the Hungarian Kingdom to the Habsburg Empire

The settlement today called Sântana is located in the region of contemporary Arad county and belonged to the Hungarian medieval kingdom. It appears for the first time in documents by 1334 under the name of Komlós. After Hungary's defeat at Mohács (1526) it belonged successively to the principality of Transylvania, to the Ottoman Empire and from 1691 to the Habsburg Empire. After the dissolution of Austro-Hungary (the late version of the Habsburgs' ruled territories) Sântana belongs to Romania.

The first documentary trace of Komlós (Comlăuș in Romanian) records it as a 10-15 households helmet in the tax lists of the Catholic Church around 1334-5.⁵ The settlement is mentioned in several documents throughout the next centuries, always as a small community of serfs on the list of domains of local Hungarian feudal lords.⁶

After the defeat of the kingdom of Hungary by the Sublime Porte, Arad region was contested between the two 'heirs' of the Hungarian kingdom, the Habsburg Empire and the principality of Transylvania under Turkish suzerainty. From 1566 the Turks assume direct control of the area and Comlăuș became a part of the Ottoman *villaet* (administrative unit) of Timișoara. Although, as far as I could find out, no data are available about the years of Turkish rule I tend to assume that serfs continued

raising cattle and paying their dues in kind and labor to the local landlord. According to Stokes⁷ “when Hungary came under Ottoman rule, exports actually increased, especially cattle (...) in the middle of sixteenth century Hungary was supplying 100 000 head of oxen to the prosperous South German cities.” The thesis of economic growth under Turks might be supported by local demographic evidence: if by 1640’s Comlăuș was listed with 30 households; by the beginning of Habsburg occupation (in 1726) it comprised 112 households.⁸

The end of seventeenth century witnesses the crumbling of the Ottoman power in the region and the rise of the Habsburg Empire: Vienna extends its sway over the Eastern Hungary and the previously independent principality of Transylvania eventually reaching Danube as its border with the shrinking Ottoman Empire. These developments in international relations had a lasting impact over my case study. In the following section I will offer a very short overview of the transformations of the political and social context in the region triggered by the Habsburg victory.

The areas controlled directly by the Turks became part of the Habsburg Empire in two steps: the region north of Mureș river (including Komlós/Comlăuș) after the treaty of Karlowitz (1699) and the region south of Mureș after the treaty of Passarowitz (1718). Thus the newly conquered areas were administratively organized according to the timing of their inclusion in the empire: the areas acquired in the first stage were incorporated into Hungary while those occupied later were constituted into a new administrative unit, a ‘Land of the Crown’ named the Banat of Timișoara⁹ - see *Map 2*.

Within the mosaic-like empire, Hungary and Transylvania were included as autonomous units with their specific institutions, including their own diets and the right to call assemblies. The court in Vienna was forced to appeal to the support of the local nobility in order to defeat the Turks, and was unable to impose a centralized, un-uniform administration. Instead, the Emperor had to accommodate the local privileges and ‘liberties’ claimed by the landlords of both Hungary and Transylvania.

The kingdom of Hungary was the largest imperial province, and its old nobility succeeded to defend its privileges, mainly its tax-exemption, opposing the centralizing attempts of the emperors in Vienna.¹⁰ Hungary was dominated by an old class of Hungarian-speaking noblemen, ruling over villages of mostly Hungarian and Slavic-speaking serfs. Romanian-speaking population was concentrated only at the Eastern limits

of the province, bordering Transylvania, where it represented a significant proportion of the population.

Transylvania had been a province of the Hungarian kingdom that became a quasi-independent state. Transylvania kept switching its suzerainty allegiance between the Sublime Porte and the House of Habsburgs until the defeat of the Turks when it was incorporated into the empire as a distinct principality. Even more than in Hungary, its local nobility managed to preserve its specific privileges, and to block centralizing efforts from Vienna. The size of the feudal domains in Transylvania was smaller than those of Hungary, its economy underdeveloped, but this backwardness and the stubbornness of the local (Hungarian, largely Protestant) gentry made the influence of imperial policy less successful there.¹¹ The ethnic distribution of Transylvania included a dominant layer of Hungarian and Szekler noblemen, a stratum of free German-speaking colonists, settled in the principality by twelfth century, and a multitude of Romanian-, Hungarian- and Slavic-speaking serfs.

It was only in the last-conquered, southern region of Eastern Hungary that the Habsburgs could set up a province that would be more similar to the centralized model that they favored. The creation of the Banat of Timișoara must be seen against this background in which the Imperial center struggled with the particularistic provinces aiming for a more centralized state, following the model of the Western European Great Powers. Major investments were made in Banat by the Court – swamps had been drained, its main city, Timișoara/Temesvár, had been re-built, and – more important to our story – the depopulated area was colonized with German speaking families of Catholic faith from Bayern, Baden-Wurtemberg and Austria proper, but also with small communities of Italians, French, Spaniards and even Scots.¹² This move aimed both to energize the economy of the new conquered lands and was spurred by the imperial policy of counter-reformation. At the same time, Empress Marie Therese allowed for the first time in the history of the region that the nomadic Gypsies to settle nearby towns and villages.¹³ The demographic data indicate that Romanians constituted by far the largest ethnic group in Banat at the time of its creation, followed by the German-speaking colonists. Grisellini, who studied Banat in 1776-1777 claims that Habsburg administration in Timisoara provided him with the following data: 181,639 Romanians, 42,201 colonists (Germans, Italians and French), 78,780 Serbians, 8,683 Bulgarians, 5,272 Gypsies and 353 Jews.¹⁴ Eventually Banat ended up by being incorporated into Hungary

proper, but it maintained its specific character given by the special circumstances in which this region was settled, organized and colonized.

Banat's neighboring counties, located north of Mureș river, Arad and Zarand (where Comlăuș stood) were areas that shared the same ecological characteristics as those of Banat, but, being conquered earlier, were incorporated into Hungary by a 1732 Imperial decree. Some 30 km East of Comlăuș the new demarcation line was drawn between Transylvania and Hungary, running along the sub-Carpathian hills. Consequently, the village is located roughly at the intersection of Hungary, Transylvania and Banat (See Map 2). Arad region shares with Banat its ecological transformations (from an area covered in forests and wetlands to a large plane surface with a soil of high agricultural quality) and the fact that it became a site for German colonization and the fact that was inhabited by a large number of Orthodox, Romanian-speaking peasants. It is set apart by its distinct administrative location – instead of depending directly from the Crown, it was subjected to Hungary's laws. With Transylvania, the Arad region had in common their significant Romanian presence, but it is set apart both by ecological factors (Transylvania is largely a region of mountains and hills, ill fitted for agriculture) and by its administration and laws – as we will see, the fate of Transylvania's serf was much tougher than that of those from Hungary.

Arad was a part of Hungary historically, administratively and ecologically (being located in the Hungarian plain) and this fact has definitely shaped its evolution. While in Transylvania the counter-reformation imperial policies pushed hard for the creation of a new, Catholic in substance and Orthodox in ritual, Greek-Catholic church aiming to convert the Romanians, the Romanians from Hungary proper had been spared, and remained solidly Orthodox. Unlike the core of historical Hungary, Arad was not a Hungarian-speaking region: the Romanians formed in the 18th century a significant part of the population.

I appeal to Nicolae Iorga's seminal work *The History of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary* to stress that I am addressing here the history of a region that belonged to "the Romanians from Hungary," at the intersection of influences coming both from Banat and from Transylvania. Only the confluence of these three sets of factors can illuminate the evolution of my case-study. I see the local developments I will introduce in the following pages as being made possible, and shaped by the regional settings I have already delineated.

d. Serfdom and ethnicity before the 1848 revolution

After the Turkish defeat the lands North of Mureş river were appropriated by the imperial family and since 1699 Comlăuş was incorporated in the domains owned by the state. Caporal Alexa, the village located only 5 km East of Comlăuş, was part of a large part of Zarand county donated in 1732 by the emperor Charles VI to Reinold, duke of Modena. The donation created a huge feudal domain inhabited mainly by “Romanian serfs with the right to freely migrate, of Orthodox faith” (Ciuhandu, 1940: 10), as undoubtedly there were also the serfs from neighboring Comlăuş.

The first imperial census in the region (1726) found at Comlăuş 99 Romanian households, 10 Hungarian and 3 Serbian.¹⁵ These are all serfs, classified by the imperial census along two main tax categories:

a) ‘hospites’ or serfs which had their own house, and a parcel of land for personal use, for which they had to pay in nature and in days of work to the feudal lord and which are taxable by the state (they pay taxes per cattle, goats, bee hives,¹⁶ etc.).

b) ‘inquilines’ – people who do not have land for personal usage, sometimes not even a house. They are manual workers on the feudal domain.¹⁷

The duties of the serfs in the new Habsburg settings appear in the records of the ‘Diet’ (the Assembly of the Estates) of Hungary of 1714. The ‘hospites’ and each of their family members had to work four unpaid days per week on lord’s land, while the ‘inquilines’ owed only three days of work for free. This amount of unpaid labor is the result of a long evolution. For example, 200 hundred years earlier, a decree of 1514 set the servile labor due by the serf at one day per week.¹⁸ Yet the new serf obligations were worsened by local practices. For instance, in 1751 the administrative head of the region Ineu (less than 30 km away from Sântana) complains to the duke of Modena that ‘the duke’s managers are stealing and forcibly extracting illegal dues from the serfs’.¹⁹ The villagers of Curtici (15 km West of Comlăuş), answering in 1754 the state administrators questionnaire on their relations with the feudal lord, mention that “up to now around 40 heads of well settled households left the village, as they cannot face the too many days of free labor they have to perform in the interest of the lord. Also, the lord cut away from serfs’ endowments and expanded his land.”²⁰

These data suggest that the integration of the region into the Habsburg system of feudal relationships worsened the situation of the serfs, as

compared with their situation under the Ottomans. The reaction in the Arad area translated soon into peasants participation in the 1735 uprising led by one Pero Seghedinat, where Serbian and Romanian peasants rose against the feudal lords. Data on Comlăuș are not available, but the serfs from the neighboring village, Cherechi, have run away to Banat after the defeat of the uprising, indicating that local peasants have been involved in the rebellion.²¹

I see these local developments as illustrating Wolf's theory on the 'second serfdom' contending that while Western Europe "moved toward the commutation of rents in labor and kind into money rents" Eastern Europe moved toward creation of large *latifundia* grounded not on commercial agriculture and money economy but on "increased and intensified use of various kinds of *coerced or bound work*".²²

Serfs were socially stratified, not only in comparison with the inquilines, but also among themselves. Lacking data on Comlăuș I relay on Grisellini who notes that in the neighboring Banat, Romanians could aspire only to the position of "cnez" (village principal), who usually was an illiterate peasant who kept track of the taxes the villages has to pay and of the days of labor the village owes to the lord.²³ The other important person in the village was the Orthodox priest, a serf himself, whose knowledge, claims Grisellini, was limited to the ability to read and sing the psalms. "Their only aim is to reap the economic advantages of their holy mission."²⁴ It is interesting to note that by 1747 the richest serf from the entire Arad region was the Romanian Orthodox priest from Comlăuș:²⁵ Popa Nicula (Father Nicula) who owned 8 oxen, 5 cows, 4 horses, 3 sheep, 55 goats, and 12 pigs.²⁶ Besides these two important positions, claims Grisellini, "Romanians show respect to those among themselves who are better off, that is those who own many cattle, cultivate many cereals, and produce lots of brandy and wine."

In the next section I will move toward a more salient divide to be born in Comlăuș, the arrival of German settlers and the birth of Sanktanna. Undoubtedly the most influential feudal lord in the history of the village was baron Jakab Bibics, who bought Comlăuș as well as two neighboring villages (Olari and Zarand) in 1745 (Ciuhandu, 1940: 90). The baron represents the new nobility created by the Habsburgs: a 'new man,' who bought his title in 1722 and a recent convert to Catholicism. He was not a traditional 'aristocrat' living off his land, but a self-made man and a Habsburg official, the deputy-head of Zarand county.²⁷ Following the example of the imperial Court colonizing Banat with Catholic

German-speaking peasants, baron Bibics brought Catholic German speaking families from Speyer, Baden-Württemberg, Westfalia, Turingia, Tirol, Schwartzwald, Bayern, Oberpfalz but also Alsace (currently France). The new colonists were settled in a swamp in the forests South-West of Comlăuș sometime between 736 and 1742.²⁸ The arrival of the German settlers marks the major radical break in the history of the place. Every German serf was granted with the usage of 13.5 hectares of arable land and 6 hectares of forest.²⁹ Although I had no access on data regarding the endowments of the Romanian serfs, we can assume that, if they were not as generous as those put forward to lure in the Germans, they must be comparable. It is notable that the 1746 census among Romanians in Comlăuș found only three heads of family owning very few or no land at all. The feudal lord had enough land which was to be deforested and cultivated: the labor force was scarce – thus small number of landless peasants and, first of all, the policy of colonization.

The new settlement was named Sanktanna and has been granted the title of market place in 1748. I assume a continuous, although non-official and non-recorded process of immigration from various German-speaking territories in the following years, as natural increase of the population would hardly account for the census of 1760 amounting at 234 German families: 61 settled in Comlăuș and 173 in Sanktanna proper. By 1802 there were in total 366 families.³⁰ The demographic forces as well as the reluctance of the landlords to distribute additional land to their serfs made that by 1771 German Sanktanna hosted 257 families of German serfs, who had only 107 spots of land granted by the lord, which means that many of the young Germans were either landless or had to content with a much smaller land spot than their parents. The hardships of the second serfdom did not spare the Schwaben colonists: on March 20, 1752 county official Vásárhelyi reports that Sanktanna is under a grave threat of being depopulated, as more and more the serfs chose to run away than to face landlord's requirements.³¹

From this perspective the major turning point of 18th century serfdom in Hungary was the "urbarial" regulation of the relationships between feudal lord and serfs put forward by Empress Marie Therese in 1771.³² Out of the need to calm down peasant riots and to defend the tax-paying population from abuses (we remember that in Hungary the nobility did not pay taxes) the unpaid work due by the serfs was regulated by law. While this proved possible in Hungary, the same regulation was not put into practice in neighboring Transylvania, marking a major difference

between serfs in the two provinces. From 1771 on, the serf owning a full lot of land (which was set in the counties we are dealing with at 13-16 hectares) owned only one, respectively two days of unpaid work per week on his feudal lord's behalf, depending whether the serf owned a cart driven by oxen or horses, or not. The new settings favored the development of serf economy, bettered the situations of farmers. In contrast with the serfs in neighboring Transylvania the small peasants in Arad region had less reasons to rebel, which was obvious by 1784 when the major rebellion of Romanian serfs from Transylvania was not joined by those living in the Hungarian plain. Actually, Sanktanna hosted a number of Transylvanian feudal lords who took refuge here due to the threat of the peasant uprising.

Marie Therese' *urbarial* regulation brought, in long term, a level of prosperity and, with it, an increase of the population in the region. At the time of the regulation there were 157 families *hospes* in Comlăuș, and in Sanktanna 254, to which two families of *inquilines* have to be added. By 1835 the historian Fabian Gabor³³ notes that Sanktanna numbered 405 households of *hospites*, and already 80 households of *inquilines*, landless serfs. Comlăuș numbered at the same time 405 households of *hospites*, and 48 *inquilines* –witnessing that the population quadrupled in Comlăuș as compared to the census of 1746. The population increase brought with it a certain level of peasant pauperization: in the context in which the landlord was involved more and more in agricultural trade, it began to limit its allocation of land to the serfs, which made that more and more serfs had to content with less land, or no land at all. It is interesting to note that, at the time there were more landless German serfs than Romanian ones, which may be related to a custom by which German land was not divided among all brothers, as Romanians did, but was passed to the elder brother, while the rest of the children had to find other means of making a living.

From an ethnic perspective, there were 4,885 inhabitants in Sanktanna, out of which one fourth were Hungarians and the rest Germans "leaning toward Magyarization" in the words of the Hungarian historian. In Comlăuș, Gábor finds 2,734 inhabitants, mostly Romanians, but also many nomadic Gypsies and few Catholics (undoubtedly German Schwaben). We see here a process in which a successful colonization policy brings in Catholic, German-speaking families, with a high fertility rate: the data indicate an average of 12 family members for each Sanktanna (Schwaben) household and only about 7 for every Comlăuș household.³⁴

The data on Romanians are scarce, yet Ciuhandu offers the names of every *hospes* family head in Comlăuș in the 1747 census. These family names indicate a surprising degree of resilience, as more than three thirds of the families indicated by 1747 census are still present and widely known in the village.³⁵ In few cases we can infer a process of assimilation to Romanian ethnicity: the family Nagy noted at 1746 is very likely to have turned to the family Naghiu or Nadiu of later years.

Intestine differences were also dividing the German group: the major cleavage line divided the Germans living in Comlăuș from those living in Sanktanna. More than that, baron Bibics' colonists arrived from various regions of Germany but also France (Alsace) most probably speaking distinct dialects of German. The initial differences between the colonists were preserved by the spatial division of Sanktanna dating from 1784 (see *Map 3*): the village is structured in four sectors of a square, divided by the cross of the two main streets, meeting in the central square³⁶ (hosting the Catholic Church dedicated to Saint Ann and the City Hall).³⁷ Each sector has a name, one of whom is Alsace (Elsaz), hosting apparently those arrived from that region of France, and another one 'Nincs'³⁸ is hosting mostly the craftsmen (many of which were poorer than the average farmer, and some of whom were ethnic Hungarians). Even as late as the 1950's these sectors preserved a fairly strong power of social boundary, as young people from one quarter were not supposed to date or marry people from another quarter, and many boys fights were occasioned by couples transgressing these lines.

Thus the common 'ethnicity' of Sanktanna's 'Germans' is definitely a product of the process of colonization and cohabitation rather than any 'common' or 'pre-existing' Germanhood. The major unifying factor seems to have been the Catholic faith that linked the group and differentiated it from Orthodox Romanians, and set them on a different structural position toward the state, and the lord of the land. Yet, ethnicity was not a segregating cleavage – instead of having an all-Romanian (or, all Orthodox Comlăuș) versus an all-German (Catholic) Sanktanna we witness an asymmetric relationship. While no Romanians could settle in Sanktanna, many Germans did settle in Comlăuș.

The Gypsies are not mentioned for the first time in the 1771 census in Comlăuș, where it seems they made about 5% out of the total population.³⁹ Only the report of Gábor Fábian from 1835 mentions them again at Comlăuș. It is possible that, paralleling the settling of the Gypsies in neighboring Banat by the orders of Empress Marie Therese, baron Bibics

followed the Courts initiative in this respect too, as it did in respect to German colonization, or, according to other theories, that they lived in the village from the 14th or 15th century. The Gypsies seem to have always been spatially segregated at the Eastern limits of Comlăuș, were they can be found still today, stigmatized, poor and living in worse conditions than Romanians or Germans. Contemporary ethnographic research indicates that they are older, settled earlier than the Gypsies living in the neighboring villages. They speak their own language and until the early 1990's they were of Greek Orthodox faith.

We have seen a small number of Serbians are inhabitants of Comlăuș in 1746. In eighteenth century Arad region had been inhabited by a significant Serbian minority. They were in general enrolled in the imperial border-guard regiments. By 1741 the regiments were disbanded, as on one hand the border line had moved South-East of Arad, and on the other hand the local landlords pressed for more servile labor, out of which the soldiers had been previously spared. This context sparked the uprising of Pero, and after its defeat, made the Serbians of Arad to immigrate. Faith was a major factor in this migration, as the Orthodox Serbians chose to leave for present-day Ukraine, under the protection of the fellow-Orthodox Empress of Russia. Thus the Serbian presence in the area after 1740's is negligible.

Ethnicity did not seem to be the relevant issue it was bound to become in the 19th century Austro-Hungary, as far as we can learn out of the scarce documents. The period covered here focused on *faith* as a crucial issue, alongside with the issue of the serfdom – this was as relevant to the state, to the Romanians, Germans and Serbians, as we have just seen. The wave of counter-reformation that brought the Schwaben in the area was linked with the efforts to convert the Orthodox Romanians (as well as Serbians and Bulgarians in the area) to Catholicism.⁴⁰ The social and the confessional issues seem to have been dominant during this period as the essential markers of social boundaries within the communities living in Comlăuș and Sanktanna. Nevertheless, Fabian Gabor notes a greater sense of identification with a sense of Hungarianness among the Germans and fails to note the same about their Romanian neighbors.

e. The emancipation of serfs: farmers, landless peasants and small craftsmen

The major inflection point in the social history of the region is the liberal and national Hungarian revolution of 1848, whose postponed conclusion was the creation of the dual monarchy of Austria and Hungary, as two states sharing the same emperor (ruling as king of Hungary in the Eastern side, and as Emperor of Austria in the Western one) as well as having a common army, external policy and the same currency. The long and protracted struggle between the centralizing tendencies of the emperors in Vienna and the particularistic freedoms and tax-exemptions claimed by the Hungarian noblemen (large landowners and gentry) from Transylvania and Hungary proper exploded in the revolutionary year 1848: the exponents of the liberal Hungarian gentry took the arms and declared a larger Hungary (united with Transylvania) independent, where serfs were freed but no provisions for cultural or language rights were made. During the subsequent war between the revolutionary Hungarian forces and the imperial army the elite of most important non-Hungarian communities within Hungary, the Croats and the Romanians from Transylvania took the arms and fought against the revolution, on national grounds.⁴¹ 1949 saw the military defeat of the Hungarian revolution, but the social realities that generated it remained unchanged and ten years after, the weak Empire, defeated in war, had to appeal to the Hungarians and to create a bi-nuclear state, one of them being (what was called for convenience) Austria and the kingdom of Hungary (including Transylvania and Banat)⁴² in 1967. The Eastern half was to be ruled from Budapest by a prime-minister and by the Hungarian Parliament, who was to be elected on a highly skewed mechanism favoring the large landowners and the ethnic Hungarians.

Serfdom was abolished for good in 1853 in Hungary. The serfs who had the usage of a piece of land were endowed with it, while the landless serfs were not to receive anything. According to Gale "The formal freeing of the Hungarian serfs in 1848 left 60% of them landless".⁴³ The landlords managed to preserve the major part of their domains – and thus forced the peasants into a inferior position in which they needed to work on the lord's land in order to earn the living that their eager lots (if any) could not provide. This seems to have been the intention of those who pushed through this piece of legislation: the oral history of a village located 50-60 km South-East of Sântana still remembered - almost 130 years later - the time when serfdom was abolished. According to the story, a few

young gentlemen came on carriage in the village and let the peasants know: “to continue to work on landlord’s fields, but to ask **to be paid** for their work from now on!”⁴⁴ The insertion of Hungary in the European flux of capital brought about an increased commercialization of agriculture. The serf labor was not enough lucrative for the new conditions, which explains the new set of relationships between the land owner and the peasant, ruled not by feudal obligation but by paid labor.

By the abolitions of serfdom and the introduction of a system of private ownership of the land “the way was opened for a capitalist transformation of agriculture”.⁴⁵ All authors agree that these years mark an agricultural revolution, replacing the medieval three field system of cultivation with modern rotation of crops. Also the antiquated tools were replaced by new ones: “if in the mid 1840’s there were just four trashing machines operating in the whole country” there were 400 in 1855 and 5,600 in 1871. These developments produced a radical improvement of the yields:

Table 1. Production of main crops in Hungary from 1864 to 1913⁴⁶

| Crop | 1864-1866 (tons) | 1911-1913 (tons) |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Wheat | 172,000 | 491,000 |
| Rye | 112,000 | 132,000 |
| Barley | 67,000 | 168,000 |
| Oats | 62,000 | 136,000 |
| Maize | 134,000 | 485,000 |
| Potatoes | 73,000 | 549,000 |
| Sugar beet | 2,000 | 433,000 |

According to the average figures computed by Berend and Csoto before 1870 wheat yield per hectare had been around 300 kg, only to reach about 900 kg per hectare in 1910. Maize yields rose by 60% and potato yields by 160%⁴⁷.

These developments were reflected in Sântana too, even if it belonged to the Eastern, less developed, side of Hungary. After 1800 the large state domains are sold to nobles and non-nobles who could afford to pay the large sum the state needed. This made Arad county an area of large domains, owned mostly by non-nobles investing in commercial agriculture

in order to increase their profits. This unleashes a protracted struggle between the new land-owners interested less in the servile work of their serf and more in expanding the land pertaining to the domain (their main source of income), restricting the land allotted to the serfs.

The specificity of Sanktanna's position is that, unlike its neighboring villages, it witnesses the rapid development of a class of independent peasant landowners, initially on the parcels (or elements of the parcels) they used and worked as serfs and later (most probably) on bought land. Statistical data suggest a steady rise of the independent peasant farmers: between the years 1770 and 1802 the amount of land owned by peasants almost doubled: from 1583 to 2,769 hectares, while the grazing area (communal ownership) grew from 705 to 1,248 hectares. These peasants are legally still serfs, but after 1781 they begin to pay a lump sum buying over from the landlord their servile obligations.⁴⁸ For example, the city of Arad paid over its freedom from servile obligation 200,000 florins from 1804 to 1826.⁴⁹

As the social stratification in the village is concerned, the data from 1886 refer to ethnic Germans in Sanktanna and Comlăuș with no mention of the number of ethnic Romanians:

Table 2. Social stratification by occupations of the Germans living in Sanktanna and Comlăuș by 1886.⁵⁰

| Ethnic Germans | Sanktanna | % | Comlăuș | % |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Farmers | 884 | 69.94 | 354 | 71.66 |
| Craftsmen | 232 | 18.35 | 53 | 10.73 |
| Agricultural workers | 126 | 9.97 | 80 | 16.19 |
| Intellectuals | 22 | 1.74 | 7 | 1.42 |
| Heads of family | 1,264 | 100 | 494 | 100 |
| Total of Germans | 5,562 | | 1,458 | |
| Number of households | 901 | | 339 | |

At a closer look they are classified as:

- 6 great land-owners,
- 11 agricultural entrepreneurs (*arendasi*), renting more than 50 hectares each,
- 506 peasant households owning in between 25-50 hectares,

- 86 peasant households owning less than 10 hectares,
- 119 servants and hired workers
- 730 landless peasants.⁵¹

I see in these figures the dividing lines that delineate the relevant social divisions within the German peasants at Sântana just before the turn of the century: a tiny minority of large farmers (about 1%), a sizable population of well-to-do independent farmers (34%) as well as few small farmers (6%) having at their disposal the plentiful reserve of labor of the rest of the villagers: landless peasants (50%) and agricultural workers and servants (8%). To which we should add the craftsmen and intellectuals.⁵² Also, according to a local historian quoted in Sinescu,⁵³ at the time around less than 2% of Sanktanna's population owed more than 50 hectares, 50% were farmers owning from 5 to 50 hectares, 8% represented poor peasants owning less than 5 ha and 40% were (landless) servants and agricultural workers,

Nevertheless, the existence of a vibrant German community of relatively rich peasants was undoubtedly a factor that accelerated the tendency of the Romanian inhabitants of Komlós/Comlăuș to strive for independent, peasant property. I assume in their case the same trend toward peasant ownership developed, albeit on a much lesser scale. The only available data are for 1900 when (as assumed) we find the Romanian peasant land ownership lagging behind the German one: if the peasants from Comlăuș owned all in all 3,124 hectares, those from Sanktanna bypassed them with more than a half, reaching 7,263 hectares.⁵⁴ Romanian novelist Ioan Slavici (1848-1925) grew up in the neighboring village of Șiria and worked for a year in Comlăuș as local notary's clerk. His work offers an ethnographic description of the Romanian rural world in the 1860-1880's. In Slavici's prose writings (especially in "Pădureanca", a short story with the plot located in Curtici, 10 km West from Comlăuș) we are presented a world of medium-sized Romanian peasants properties living alongside with landless agricultural laborers. The Romanian peasants were segregated along two lines: economic standing and regionalism. On the one hand we see rich and poor land owners, as well as landless agricultural workers who worked as hired hands. On the other hand, there are strong divisions along regional lines: forest people living in the hills, *câmpeni* (plain people, living in the Hungarian plain) and *luncani* (those who lived along Mureș river valley). The large crops of the rich soils of the plain area (like those in Sântana or Curtici) were harvested by the plain people with the help of *pădureni* – who descended for the harvest

time, worked manually and returned home with the wheat and maize for the entire year.⁵⁵ The inequalities that loom in the world described by Slavici did not take the shape of an open conflict in the case of the Romanian community. Yet, within this independent peasantry, economic disparities grew larger, in the context in which the commercialization of agriculture pushed for a more intensive and extensive cultivation of the land. The process of growing inequalities among peasants is more visible among the German community, richer and better inscribed within the commercial agriculture of Austro-Hungary. The farmers became more and more interested in producing for a larger market (the railway was extended to Sanktanna in 1871).⁵⁶ These developments ended up in an open and bloody conflict between rich peasants and poor ones, the so-called *Antonikrieg*. In 1899 a group of rich German farmers claimed ownership on parts of the communal grazing field with the complicity of the mayor. This triggered a riot of the poor German peasants which was settled only by the intervention of the military leaving five poor peasant women dead. The intended 'privatization' of the communal pasture was however abandoned.

However, Sanktanna was not inhabited by peasants only: the sons who could not inherit land usually became craftsmen. The census of 1910 offers the first detailed data on the structure of occupations in the village:

| Structure of occupations | Sanktanna | Percentage | Comlăuș | Percentage |
|--|-----------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| Active population | 2464 | 100% | 2136 | 100% |
| Agriculture | 1371 | 55.60% | 1611 | 75.40% |
| Industry | 611 | 24.80% | 325 | 15.20% |
| Trade | 113 | 4.60% | 49 | 2.30% |
| Transport | 30 | 1.20% | 9 | 0.40% |
| Public service, liberal professions | 58 | 2.30% | 24 | 1.10% |
| Daily Laborers | 24 | 1.70% | 0 | 0% |
| Servants | 105 | 4.30% | 22 | 1% |
| Other | 147 | 5.90% | 91 | 4.30% |

While 55% percent of Germans of Sanktanna were involved in agriculture, for Comlăuș this figure is over 75%. These figure account on the one hand on the lack of vocational training in the case of Romanians, who were overwhelmingly peasants, and, on the other hand, on the pressure of the children of German families to find a life trajectory (usually craftsmanship) independent of land-ownership, as the Germans favored land consolidation: the older child traditionally inherited all the land. On the contrary, Romanians divided as an inheritance for all the children.

We can evaluate next how the agricultural tasks were shared in the two villages:

Table 3. People living out of agriculture in Sanktanna and Comlăuș in 1910.⁵⁷

| People living out of agriculture | Sanktanna | Percentage | Comlăuș | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| Owning over 50 ha | 15 | 1.1% | 0 | 0 |
| Renting over 50 ha | 2 | 0.1% | 4 | 0.2% |
| Small farmers | 290 | 21.1% | 84 | 5.2% |
| Small farmers and daily workers | 283 | 20.6% | 298 | 18.5% |
| Renting land | 5 | 0.4% | 8 | 0.5% |
| Family members helping in the fields | 402 | 29.3% | 333 | 20.7% |
| Servants | 118 | 8.6% | 81 | 5% |
| Workers aged over 16 | 244 | 17.8% | 724 | 45% |
| Workers aged under 16 | 12 | 0.9% | 78 | 4.9% |
| Total | 1,371 | 100% | 1,610 | 100% |

My interpretation of these data would be that they introduce us to a world structured by the amount of land owned or rented. We have a minority (1% of the population) of large properties over 50 ha, all German, none Romanian, and two Comlăuș families renting over 50 hectares (ethnicity cannot be inferred).

The second layer is constituted by two less obvious categories: ‘small famers’ and ‘small farmers and daily workers’. I assume that those ranked within the first category had a sustainable family farm, while the others owned some land, but in order to make the ends meet had also to work for others. The disparities among Comlăuș and Sanktanna are again telling: 20% of Sanktanna’s inhabitants had enough land to support themselves, while there were only 5% in Comlăuș.

I read the third layer as being constituted by workers, people who owned a household and no land, who constitute 45% of the people living in Comlăuș. If we add the child labor (aged under 16) we learn that roughly half of Comlăuș’ population actively involved in agriculture was in this situation.

Finally, the last layer is constituted by servants. These were as a rule hired yearly, lived as a rule in the household of the employer, a better-to-do farmer, and is age-bound. Traditionally, a young man was hired as a servant around the age of 14-16 and remained so for 6-7 years, until it managed to save enough from the yearly wages to set up a household of its own. The customs regulating the hiring of servants are telling about the local hierarchies: Gypsies were the lowest ranked community and Germans the highest. Thus Gypsies were sometimes hired by Romanians, but never by German farmers who preferred either other Germans or Romanians.

In terms of crafts and industry the situation is rather similar:

Table 4. Population employed in industry, in Sanktanna and Comlăuș, by 1910:⁵⁸

| Craftsmen 1910 | Sanktanna | Comlăuș |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Blacksmiths | 40 | 15 |
| Locksmiths | 20 | 0 |
| Brick makers | 1 | 4 |
| Potters | 5 | 5 |
| Timber workers | 1 | 0 |
| Joiners | 37 | 14 |
| Leather dresser | 9 | 2 |
| Spinners | 28 | 11 |
| Tailors | 30 | 21 |

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|-----|
| Shoemakers | 236 | 51 |
| Millers, Bakers | 18 | 9 |
| Butchers | 13 | 3 |
| Masons | 4 | 6 |
| Carpenters | 7 | 11 |
| Food-stuff producers | 23 | 2 |
| Other | 133 | 73 |
| Secondary industry | 22 | 142 |

The list of local crafts illustrates the complete lack of industrial activity, properly speaking. The image is overwhelmingly one of a rural world, dominated by agriculture with small workshops providing for local needs. The Germans of Sanktanna form overwhelmingly the skilled population: there is almost not a single row (except the secondary industry, where most probably unskilled workers were recorded) that does not illustrate a dominance of Sanktanna craftsmen over those in Comlăuș. The Germans and the few Hungarians dominated this sector and oral histories insist that there was practically no Romanian in the trade.

The survey of literacy rates indicates the same trends:

Table 5. Literacy in Saktanna and Comlăuș in 1900⁵⁹

| Literacy in 1900 | Sanktanna | % | Comlăuș | % |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Writes and Reads | 3,613 | 62.14 | 1599 | 31.92 |
| Writes and Reads in Hungarian | 2,707 | 46.56 | 673 | 13.43 |
| Total population | 5,814 | 100% | 5010 | 100% |

I assume that the difference between general literacy and 'literacy in Hungarian' are due to local forms of schooling, teaching in German and Romanian, respectively. Most probably those who are literate in Hungarian, too, are a sub-sample of the larger, literate population.

The data on literacy confirm that the German population had a literacy rate of 62% (presumably in German), simply the double of that of the Germans and Romanians from Comlăuș (assuming an insignificant, if any, level of Gipsy literacy at this time). For comparison, in the Romanian-only neighboring village, Caporal Alexa, the literacy rate is 28%.

I conclude with this overview of the two communities before the WW I. I see in the data and the historical developments presented above a distinct development: Germans moved first toward land ownership, and dominated the area with their independent farms. The demographic pressure made that those who could not accumulate land moved into professions and craftsmanship. On the contrary, Romanians owed much less land, although a class of small farmers developed in their case, too, and they had less access to crafts and industrial activities, being limited to agricultural work. Also their literacy rate is about the half of the one of their neighbors.

f. Conclusions

I have explored in the previous pages the local history of a mid-size rural settlement currently located in Arad county, Romania. My study provides an in-depth analysis of the modern transformations of peasants strata in this region of Central Europe.

The first analytical point to be stressed upon is the degree of closure of these rural communities: both in the case of Comlăuș and in the case of Sanktanna there is a high degree of family resilience; the same families recorded in the 1740's are to be found dominating the rural life in both communities.

Secondly, the fact that these people had been historically located in Eastern Hungary made their servile obligations, as well as the impact of serfdom on their village, less severe as, for example, on their Transylvanian neighbors. It is a point worth stressing that these parts of contemporary Romania, usually considered part of Transylvania, are in fact historically part of Hungary, and share a distinctly different past.

The faith issue is an essential factor in explaining the modern landscape in the community. Eighteenth's century Vienna's counter-reformation policies, as well as the pressure of the lords of the land for more servile

labor changed the ethnic landscape of Arad region: Catholic German settlers were brought in, and the Orthodox Serbians were allowed to get out.

The special consideration enjoyed by the German Catholics slowly but surely made their situation distinct from the one of their Romanian neighbors. The Germans were able to buy themselves out of serfdom earlier than Romanians and also developed guilds and crafts that the Romanians did not share.

We have witnessed the birth of a free peasantry, firstly due to the local impact of the immersion of Hungary in the European flux of capital and goods, and secondly due to the consequences of the 1848 Revolution. The social characteristics of this peasantry differed with the impact of ethnicity and faith: we saw the rise of a fairly large middle class of German farmers, besides a small number of landless peasants. Conversely, by the beginning of twentieth century, Romanians were in their absolute majority landless or poor, with a small minority of middle class Romanian farmers. The discrepancy is even larger in the membership of the local trades and in literacy rates: Germans overwhelmingly outrun Romanians in both these respects. It will be only with the advent of the Romanian state and of the agrarian reform of 1921-1922 that these trends were reversed.

ANNEXES

Annex No 1 The dynamics of ethnicity in Sanktanna and Comlăuş, since 1839.

| Year | Village | Population | Romanians | Germans | Hungarians | Gipsy |
|------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 1839 | Comlăuş | 3,887 | 2,566 | 1,302 | 19 | |
| 1839 | Sanktanna | 4,168 | 283 | 3,852 | 22 | |
| 1839 | Total | 8,055 | 2,849 | 5,154 | 41 | not available |
| 1870 | Comlăuş | 4,173 | 2,883 | 962 | 157 | |
| 1870 | Sanktanna | 4,804 | 40 | 3,747 | 855 | |
| 1870 | Total | 8,977 | 2,923 | 4,709 | 1,012 | not available |
| | Comlăuş | 4,835 | 2,703 | 1,514 | 237 | |
| | Sanktanna | 5,830 | 170 | 4,693 | 955 | |
| 1900 | Total | 10,665 | 2,873 | 6,207 | 1,012 | not available |
| | Comlăuş | 5,197 | 2,600 | 1,826 | 112 | |
| | Sanktanna | 5,582 | 260 | 4,922 | 373 | |
| 1930 | Total | 10,779 | 2,860 | 6,748 | 485 | 653 |
| 1956 | Sântana ⁶⁰ | 13,423 | 6,391 | 6,536 | 423 | |
| 1956 | Sântana | 13,423 | 6,391 | 6,536 | 423 | |
| 1964 | Sântana | 14,077 | 7,049 | 6,488 | 346 | |
| 1977 | Sântana | 15,023 | 7,412 | 6,450 | 244 | |
| 1992 | Sântana | 12,083 | 9,460 | 1,090 | 277 | |
| 1996 | Sântana | 12,957 | 8,382 | 464 | 85 | |
| 1997 | Sântana | 13,204 | 8,254 | 565 | 112 | |
| 2002 | Sântana | 12,936 | 10,230 | 452 | 284 | 1,929 |



Map 3. A 1783 map of Sanktanna and Komlós
Source: Sinescu, manuscript.

NOTES

- 1 Comlăuș was officially re-named ‘Old-Sanktanna’, while ‘New-Sanktanna’ stood the German village. Nevertheless, the inhabitants continued to use the name ‘Comlăuș’. The name re-surfaced again in official documents after WWI, when the village was incorporated into Great Romania. I will continue to use it throughout this chapter – as the villagers themselves used it all along.
- 2 The spelling varies: it was *Neu Sanktanna* in German, or *Uj Szentanna* in Hungarian under the Habsburgs, *Sf. Ana* in the interwar period, *Sîntana* under the communist regime and *Sântana* after 1990 (all meaning Saint Anne). To simplify things, I use the current spelling every time I refer to the entire inhabited area, and I use the term Comlăuș or Sanktanna when I mean the two villages out of which the unit is composed.
- 3 For details on Sântana, see Chelcea and Lățea, 2000 and Hübner, 1986.
- 4 See Sinescu, manuscript, on two, 1556 and 1595 maps of the area indicating forests around the village, as well as Brad, 1976, quoting a 1515 document of the local landlord Massay on damages done to forests “Harclean and Marot” laying between Caporal Alexa and Sicula (thus a forest at least 30 km long).
- 5 Sinescu, manuscript.
- 6 Zarna, 1994, p. 20: Between 1549 and 1561, Comlăuș belonged to two nobles (Massay and Sassay) and depended administratively to the fortress of Ineu. By 1640 the settlement (consisting at the time of only 30 houses) belonged to the aristocratic family Király. By 1663 the domain belongs to Vizesy family (www.sanktanna.info, accessed on December 7, 2007) only to become a part of Habsburg imperial domains after the Ottoman defeat.
- 7 Stokes, 1989, p. 210-251.
- 8 Sinescu, manuscript.
- 9 For a detailed discussion of the intricacies and local specificities of the mind-boggling puzzle offered by the administrative and territorial provinces of the Habsburg Empire see Macartney, 1971, Jaszi, 1961, Taylor, 1967, Mann, 1993, Prodan, 1979, and Verdery, 1983.
- 10 To contrast the Hungarian position, the only other kingdom that belonged to Habsburgs, Bohemia, had been crushed in war, its nobility destroyed and replaced with the obedient new aristocracy created by the Emperor, and where opposition toward the centralizing tendencies of the Imperial House was negligible. See Jaszi, 1961.
- 11 For a discussion of the specificity of the Transylvanian case I refer to the exemplary work of Verdery, 1983 as well as to Prodan, 1979. Both cover the local history of a Transylvanian village, situating its evolution on the background given by a detailed presentation of the historical, political and economic context of Transylvania during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both works are carried at a level of historical detail I cannot hope to match in this chapter.

- 12 The newly arrived were settled into new villages, with streets designed along geometric lines, like a chess-game board or concentric circles of houses surrounding a circular central square, graphic illustrations of the ideology of rationalism and Enlightenment ideas shared by the Court of Marie Therese and Joseph the Second, aiming to create in Banat a model region of the Empire.
- 13 The Empress effort marks, to my knowledge, the first attempt to give the Gipsy a politically correct name: the stigmatizing 'Gipsy' was to be officially replaced by the term "Neubanater" (New inhabitant of Banat). Grisellini, 1984.
- 14 Grisellini, who studied the region of Banat between 1776 and 1777 offers the following data for Banat: 181,639 Romanians, 42,201 colonists (Germans, Italians and French), 78,780 Serbians, 8,683 Bulgarians, 5,272 Gypsies and 353 Jews. Grisellini, 1984, p. 157.
- 15 See Zarna, 1998, p.20
- 16 For example, the tax was 1 Austrian florin for each pair of oxen or cows, or for every 4 young cows (*junci*), for every 2 horses or for every 4 foals, for every 10 sheep or goats, and for every 8 pigs, and, for every 15 bee-hives. These are the dues to the state, and do not include the free work due for the military, or the due for the landlord.
- 17 There is an interesting additional category, that of 'brothers living under the same roof, without dividing their assets' (by which we must understand the parcel of land and the cattle) who were being taxed slightly less than a member of a *hospes* family. I see here a possible connection with ancient forms of communal property as covered by Stahl, 1980.
- 18 See Prodan, 1979, vol I, p.49
- 19 See Ciuhandu, 1940, p. 115.
- 20 See Ciuhandu, 1940, p. 116
- 21 Sinescu, manuscript.
- 22 Wolf, 2001, p. 273, my italics, C.G.
- 23 The *cnez* or *jude* performed an unpaid job, yet during the year in which the serf assumed this office, he was tax-exempt. He was the holder of the handcuffs and also of the stick to beat the recalcitrant peasants, an intermediary between the lord and the serfs and between the state and the villagers. For these two types of *juzi* see Prodan, 1979, vol.1, p.33.
- 24 See Grisellini, 1984, p. 177.
- 25 This information highlights the rather fortunate ecological location of Sântana, since in no other village were Romanians as rich as the Comlăuș priest.
- 26 See Ciuhandu, 1940, p.200.
- 27 Baron Bibcs lived at his castle in Zarand together with his wife Margaret. Like him, she not a noble by blood: she is a daughter of an ethnic Armenian regional manager of the Postal Services of the empire who bought his aristocratic title.

- 28 Nevertheless, the colonization of Sanktanna was a matter of private initiative
of the local lord and not a part of the imperial process.
- 29 Which constitutes a proof and a reminder that by the arrival of the German
settlers a sizable part of the surrounding area was not yet deforested: actually
it seems that the non-forest hectares were to be deforested by the colonists
themselves.
- 30 See Zarna, 1998, p. 21.
- 31 Ciuhandu, 1940, p. 120.
- 32 Prodan, 1979, vol 1, p. 50.
- 33 Sinescu, 1986, p. 17.
- 34 Actually the ethnic disparities between the average size of the peasant family
are even more accentuated as the figures for Comlăuș include a certain
number of Schwaben families, whose reproductive policies must have been
more similar with those of the other Roman-Catholic Schwaben from
Sanktanna than with those of their Greek-Orthodox Romanian neighbors.
- 35 An analysis of the family names listed in the 1746 suggests that over 70% of
the families mentioned at the time are to be found today in the village.
- 36 This plan of the village resembling a chess-game board is identical with
several Banat Schwaben communities: see the map of Schoendorf
(Frumuseni) colonist village in Banat, identical with the structure of Sanktanna
in Griselini, 1984, p. 327.
- 37 See Map 3.
- 38 *Nincs* is a derogatory name, as it means “there is nothing” in Hungarian.
Nincs was thus the segment of the poor and of small craftsmen, most of them
Hungarians.
- 39 See Sinescu, manuscript.
- 40 The political salience of religious issues at the time is illustrated by a local
incident summarized by Ciuhandu (1940: 105) – the tribulations of a German
Catholic from Comlăuș who converted to Orthodoxy. Anton Habata was
born in 1693 in Comlăuș, from a Catholic German father and an Orthodox
Romanian mother, married a Romanian woman and embraced the Orthodox
faith. He was imprisoned in 1747 for apostasy (conversion from Catholicism
to Orthodoxy). Yet he refuses publicly, again and again, to return to the
Catholic faith and is convicted in 1748 to life in prison where he is to be fed
with bread and water only. The issue seems to have been a matter of public
concern, so that by 1750 the trial re-convenes and frees the Orthodox
German, as his conversion to Orthodox faith had taken place well before
Empress Marie Therese’s decree punishing apostasy.
- 41 For the revolution of 1848 and the subsequent birth of Austria-Hungary see
among others Macartney, 1971, Jaszi, 1961, Taylor 1967, Mann, 1993,
and Verdery, 1983.
- 42 Besides Croatia-Slavonia which had been traditionally part of the kingdom
of Hungary.

- 43 See Stokes, 1989, p. 43.
- 44 Corneliu Berari collected this story in early the 1980's in the village Petris, Arad county. Personal communication.
- 45 Berend and Csato, 2001, p. 70.
- 46 Source Berend and Csato, 2001, p. 74.
- 47 Berend and Csoto, 2001, p. 73.
- 48 Secția de propaganda a PCR Arad, 1978, p. 174.
- 49 Secția de propaganda a PCR Arad, 1978, p. 173.
- 50 Source Zarna, 1998, p.25.
- 51 Zarna, 1998, p. 25.
- 52 Unfortunately, data on the ethnically mix Comlăuț are not available.
- 53 Sinescu, 1986, p.14.
- 54 Zarna, 1998, p. 48.
- 55 The crux of the short story lies in the impossible love between a poor 'pădureanca' girl and the son of the rich 'campean' owner of 30 hectares of land.
- 56 It is instructive to compare the history of railway in this rather insignificant village from the Eastern side of Hungary within that of Romania: the railway reached Sântana in 1871 about the same time it reached the second largest city in Romania, Iasi, where the railway station was inaugurated in December 1870.
- 57 Source: The Hungarian Census of 1910 as published by Rotariu *et al.*, 2003.
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 Source: The Hungarian Census of 1900 as published by Rotariu *et al.*, 2001.
- 60 Data for Sântana represent the cumulated data for Sanktanna and Comlăuș, as a result of their administrative merger into one administrative (and consequently statistical) unit.

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