



STUDY TOUR REPORT

International Summer School DEALU FRUMOS, Romania

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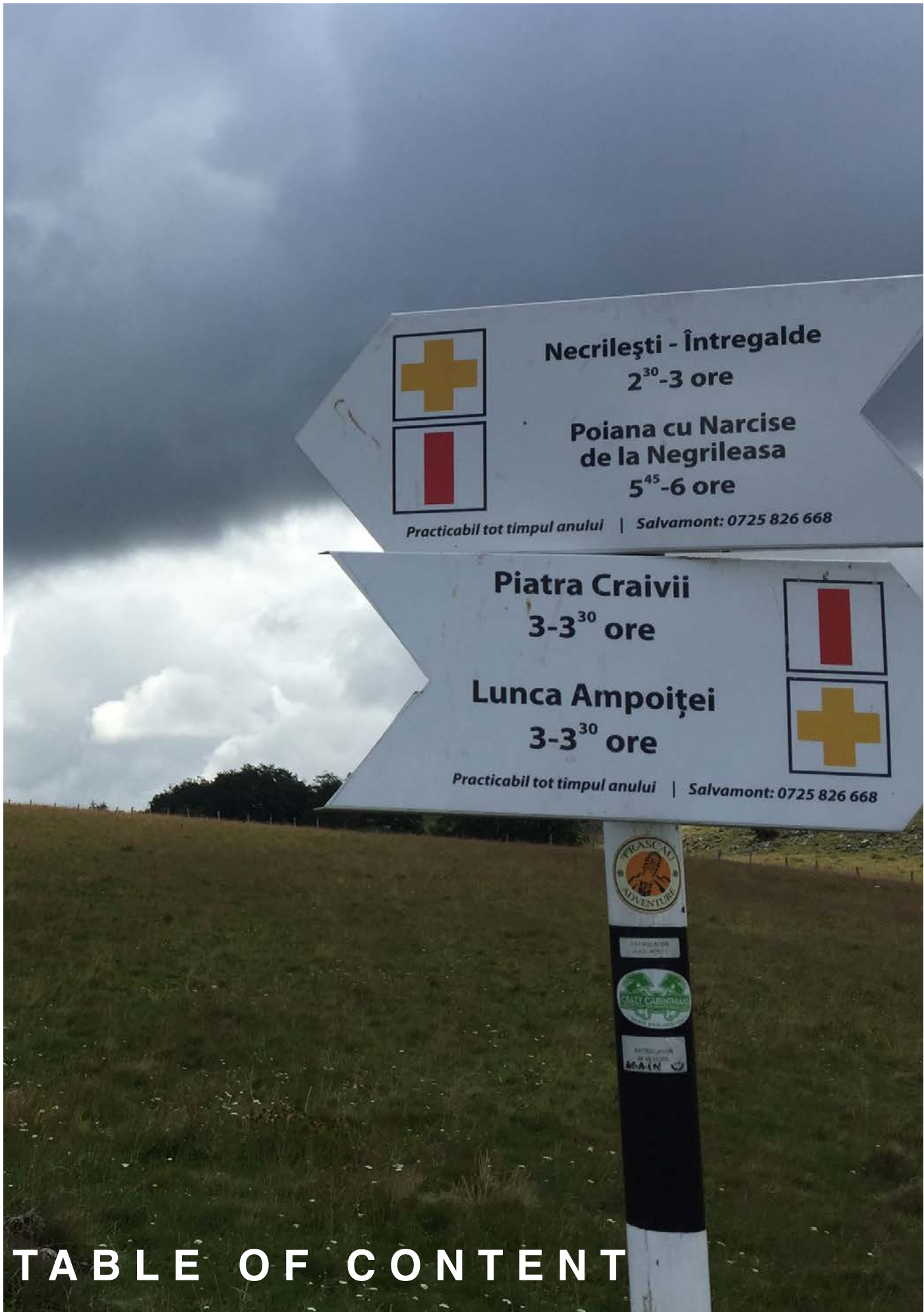


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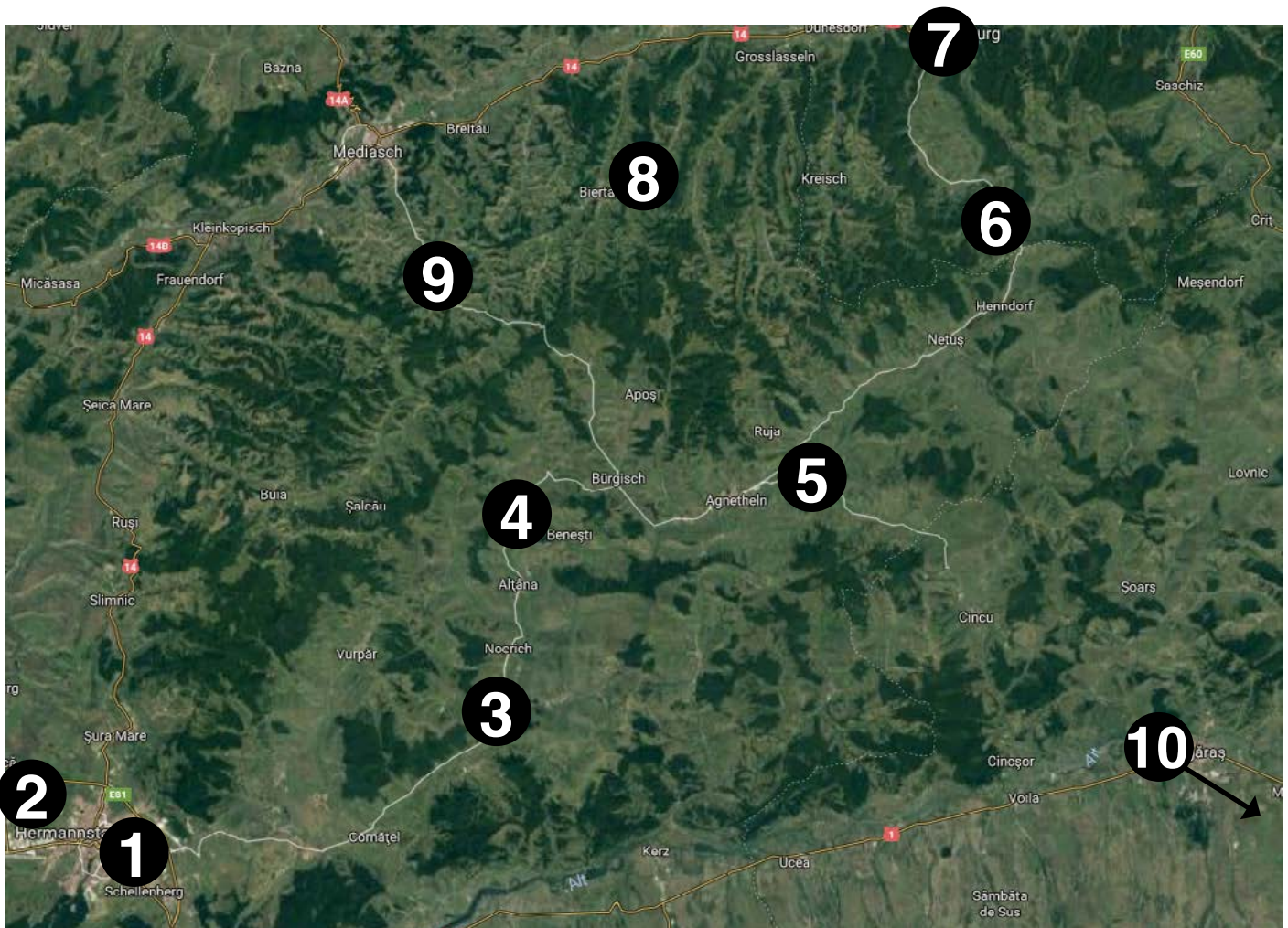
ITINERY, July 9th - 13th

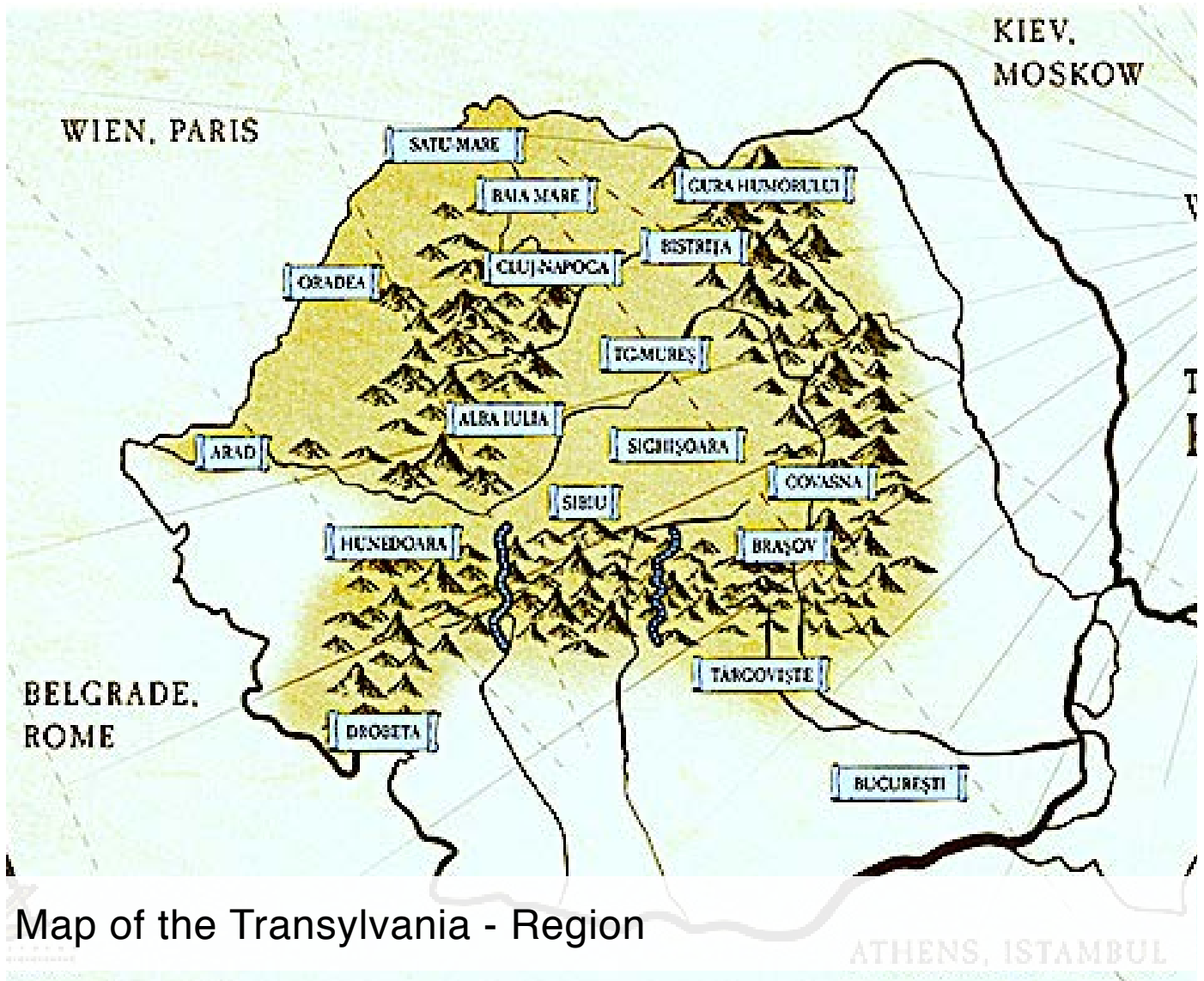


The trip started with our arrival by train in Sibiu (1) and continued to ASTRA village museum (2). On Wednesday we started with our fortified-church-visiting-tour (3,4) and ended the tour at our home base in Dealu Frumos (5). After spending there a day we continued via Trappold (6) to Schäßburg (7) to visit the historical center. After visiting another fortified church in Biertan (8) we continued to Mosna (9) to visit Willy Schuster, a pioneer in organic farming.

After a short return to Dealu Frumos my second week started with a night-ride to Brasov (10)

A tour through Fortified Churches & more





Map of the Transylvania - Region

FACT SHEET

Largest city: Cluj-Napoca
 Area: 102,834 km²
 Pop (2011): 6.789.250
 Density: 66/km²

The Region of Transylvania is located in central Romania - bound to the east and south by its natural borders, the Carpathian mountain range, historical Transylvania is extended westward to the Apuseni Mountains. Transylvania was besides Wallachia and Moldavia one of the three historical regions of Romania.

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HISTORY of the Saxons

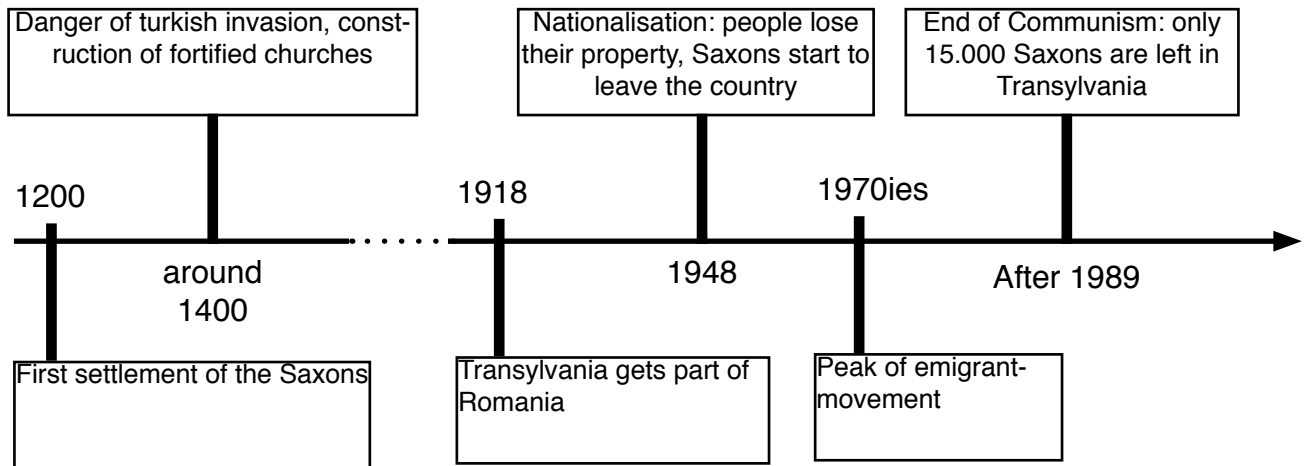


Älteste Siebenbürger Sachsen. Originalzeichnung von K. Richter. (©. 1805)

Settlement of the Saxons

It was in the 12th century when the Hungarian king Géza II. invited people from Cologne, Luxemburg or Flandern to settle down in the area of Transylvania - the so called „Transylvanian Saxons“. The purpose was a deal: The saxons should bring their knowledge in agriculture, craftsmanship and other businesses and the king gave them priviledges like soil & land to use, and reduced taxes to pay.

MILESTONES



Emigration

It was after World War II when the government started to nationalize all companies and all private property in general from the population, as well as from the Saxons. From one day to the other they lost their priviledges and got as well discriminated by the state since their own culture and religion was not accepted anymore. In this periode until the end of the communism in 1989 almost all Saxons left the country and went back to Germany or elsewhere.



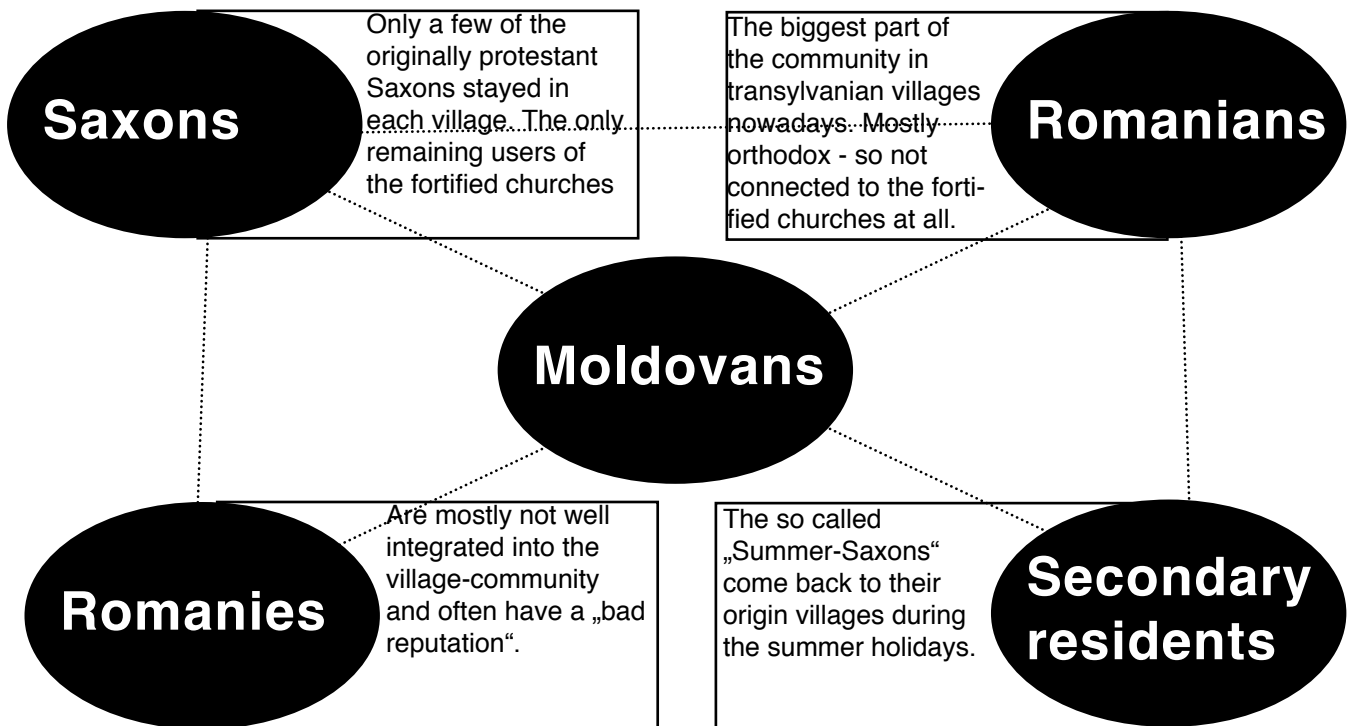
Shrinkage of German population in Transylvania

Historical population		
Year	Pop.	±%
1887	50,000	—
1930	745,421	+1390.8%
1939	786,000	+5.4%
1948	343,913	-56.2%
1956	384,708	+11.9%
1966	382,595	-0.5%
1977	359,109	-6.1%
1992	119,462	-66.7%
2002	59,764	-50.0%
2011	36,042	-39.7%

Starting with the 1930 figures, the reference is to all German-speaking groups in Romania.

Source: wikipedia.org

Ethnities today in old saxon-villages ...and their connection to the fortified churches?



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FORMER STRUCTURES of AGRICULTURE in ROMANIA



The ASTRA Village museum shows on a huge area several highlights, how and in which kind of buildings people were living in former times. This also includes also the way the houses were furnished or details as e.g. the way people were building their fences (--> the fences were very low so that people could communicate better with each other).



Map of the ASTRA-area

The village museum showed the many ways, people in Romania grew their own products next to their houses to supply themselves with fresh vegetables. Every household had its own planting-area which profited from the rich soil and the good climate for growing.

The pictures 1-4 show different variations of planting methods. Picture 5 shows the way of growing grapes, which was brought to Transylvania by the Saxons.

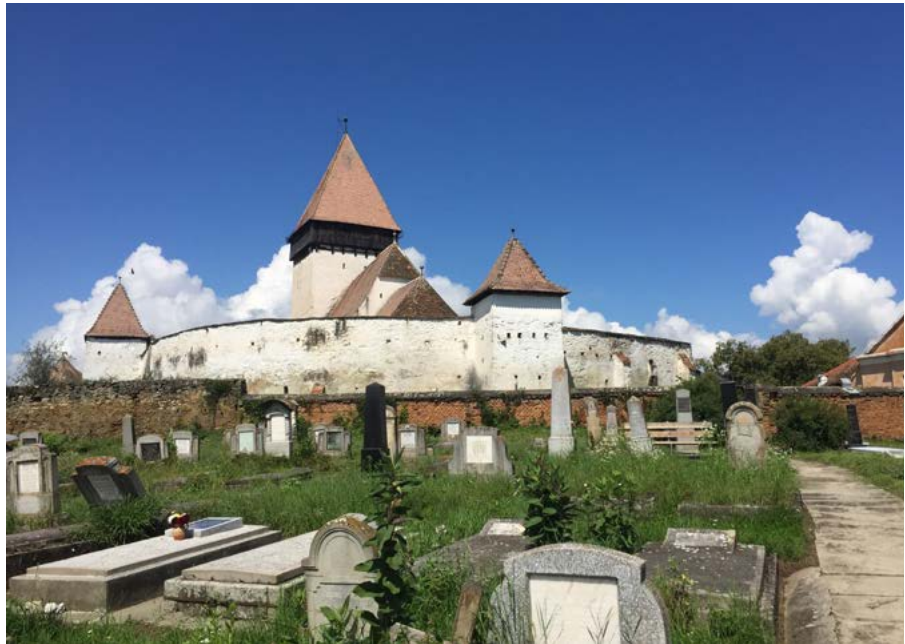


10 FORTIFIED CHURCHES

- some observations

„The identity of a fortified church influences the space around it on a very high level.“

(Andrea Manastirean,
Stiftung Kirchenburgen)



In total there are 160 fortified churches in the area of Transylvania, from which we visited about 8-12 during our trip. The conditions are various: From completely abandoned to perfectly renovated. They are situated on central positions and are often in the heart of the city. Their special architecture makes them to THE landmark of the village. Unfortunately you get the feeling that they are not as much in use anymore than in the decades before. To enter them, often a responsible person has to be called. It often seems that the village community of today is not using or considering them anymore.



Unfortunately the fortified church of _____ is in a very bad condition so that is not usable anymore - although it is situated on a small hill and has a very interesting and specific architecture. It is a pity that such a landmark is not used for any purpose anymore and slowly plants and trees are getting superiority of the building.



„din Hartibaciu“ - marketing for local products

The fortified church of Hosman is using one side-building as a shop for selling local products and other stuff for visitors. The products are branded by „din Hartibaciu“, a distributor for organic and local produced jams, pickles or more.



Also in Hosman a specific thing of former fortified churches is still visible: The so called „Bacon-Tower“ was used for saving food from the inhabitants of the village in a case of danger, when all villagers sheltered from the enemy inside the fortified church. The very thick stone walls cooled down the room inside like a cellar.

The „BACON-TOWER“ (Speckturm)



12 DEALU FRUMOS

- the middlepoint of Romania



Dealu Frumos is situated in the (geographically) very middle of Romania. A small, quiete and peaceful village that consists of only two roads which cross at the fortified church of Dealu Frumos. Around that church you can find the primary school and the Bar/MiniShop - the one and only place to hang around in the village.



DEALU-FRUMOS FACTS

<u>Inhabitants:</u>	547
<u>Children in primary school:</u>	58
<u>Age of work-start:</u>	14-15 years
<u>Quality of village community:</u>	excellent





The fortified church of Dealu Frumos is luckily because of EU fundings and a cooperation between Ion Mincu University in a quite good condition. The hall next by is re-used by the university but the inner-garden is though its beauty closed to the public and only accessible for tourists if needed.



14 TOURISM in TRANSYLVANIA



Sighisoara is one of the most visited cities in Transylvania. There are plenty of trashy-souvenir-shops, made for the busloads full of visitors coming to see the well-renovated old part of the city. There is kind of a touristic-route, that includes some touristic highlights most people are visiting. The start is mostly Sibiu or even Cluj-Napoca where there is an international airport. Other main-sights are Brietan, Bran or Brasov so that the smaller village are only explored by individual travellers and are not equipped to a higher touristic-standard with different kind of hotels or else. A specialization on a specific touristic-target-group like for example marking hiking-paths for hikers could also bring tourism and profit to smaller villages.



BIO MOSNA by Willy Schuster



Willy Schuster is a Romanian pioneer in organic-selfsufficient-vegetable production. On his farm he is able to live from his own food he is growing. He has 20 hectares of land and the four „happiest cows of Romania“, as he says. With his lifestyle he wants to demonstrate the way, less and less people are living in Romania: The own land is giving your own food for daily life so that no supermarket is needed anymore. Since more and more people are working in factories and don't have the time anymore to care about the fields, more land get sold to bigger companies, who are establishing giant mono-cultures which destroy in the long run the very rich and valuable soil - growing different kinds of vegetables makes the soil special and nutrient-rich.



16 WEEK 2: Mountain-Tourism in Piatra Craiului



The second week I spent with exploring the Carpathian Mountains which are the southern border of the Transylvania region. After visiting the „Piatra Craiului“ we continued to a smaller mountain village called Magura and finally to the very touristic city Bran - where you can find the origin of Lord Dracula. Because of the bad weather we decided to move forward to Alba Iulia, a city with a lot of history: The former fortress is in a very well renovated and is attracting a lot of tourists for visiting.

From there I hiked into the forests - an area with very little tourism, hidden villages which are only connected via a mud-road to the civilization - but the paths are very well signed so that orientation is no problem. My final stop in Romania was Cluj-Napoca, where one third of the inhabitants are students. A very westernized city, where



cafés, bars or restaurants look like in any other „western-city“.

CABANA CURMATURA „PIATRA CRAIULUI“ Nationalpark



From the center of the region, Brasov, an hourly train brings you to Zarnesti - the entrance gate to the „Piatra Craiului“ nationalpark. The touristic infrastructure is very well developed: A big network of marked paths gives you the possibility for hikes in various difficulties. The „Cabana Curmatura“, a chalet on about 1.500m allows you to spend the night in bunk beds or even private rooms. I took the low-budget offer and payed €2 for a tenting-spot. The served food has a high standard and is low priced but the environmental-standards are still improvable compared to an Austrian chalet. The toilet is chemical, cans are sold and in general the forests are polluted by the tourists who don't care much about the environment.

The nationalpark has especially on weekends a lot of Romanian visitors who come there from allover the country. During weekdays it is not so busy anymore and I met a lot of foreign tourists from different countries.

Dealu Frumos