

THE FOUR SO-CALLED BOHEMIAN VILLAGES IN THE EASTERN BANAT

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The three villages of Wolfsberg (Garana), Weidenthal (Brebul Nou) and Lindenfeld (Lindenfeld) are located in the uppermost reaches of the mountainous area of the Banat. Together with Alt-Sadova (Sadova-Veche), situated in the Timis valley, they are the only purely German settlements in this region. The ancestors of the present inhabitants came here between 1828 and 1834 from western Bohemia, mainly from the then district of Klattau. These four villages are the only German settlements in Rumania with a population from German Bohemia.

The secluded situation in the mountains (at an elevation of 900 meters), the remoteness from any transportation network, and the self-imposed isolation from the neighboring Rumanian communities all shaped the character of these four villages, whose economy has heretofore been based on a modest agriculture (principally potatoes and rye).

In recent times the economic and social structure of the four German Bohemian communities in the Banat has been changing. The number of farmers has sharply declined as more and more have joined the ranks of the wage-earners, especially in Resita (Reschitz) and Caransebes (Karansebesch). Tourism, with the optimal preconditions it enjoys in this area, offers bright prospects for the future, but at present it is of importance only in Wolfsberg.