

ȘILEA VILLAGE, A POSSIBLE FUTURE TOURISM VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT: *This paper is the structure of a comprehensive study of the natural conditions in the village of Șilea for the elaboration of a project for the development of the area. We have just mentioned a few features related to the geographical location of the area and the main natural features that constitute the main tourist potential of the village area.*

Keywords: *geographic location; isolated village; natural conditions; tourist potential;*

Among the hills, when mildly, steeply, as it looks "the landscape of the plateau between Târnava Mică and Mureș, crossed by wide valleys with large meadows or narrow valleys with steep slopes, they have established over time, humble inhabitation, with a strong and continuous experience, with vigorous cultural and spiritual life, which must not be forgotten.

Between the valley of the plateau, a valley is more "showy" with the springs beyond Herepea and the meeting with the Mureș between Noșlac and Uioara de Sus. It is Fărău valley, whose watershed forms the homonymous depression, somewhere close to the springs of this valley, being the village of Șilea, a component of Fărău commune in Alba county, located 10 km upstream of the commune's residence (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Location of the village Șilea in the Alba county and Fărău commune

Șilea is a village that administratively belongs to Farau commune with its geographical coordinates: 46°19'01" north latitude and 24°7'02" eastern longitude, the average altitude of the locality is about 429 m. It is documented in year 1219 as the *Poss Syle*. As a Hungarian name, the variants are mentioned: *Magyarsülye* or *Sülye*, the German name being *Bruckbad*.

On the Josephine Map of Transylvania in 1769-1773 (fig. 2), it appears under the name of *Magy Siillije*, having two churches. In the local toponymy, it also appears in version *Șilia Ungurească* or *Șilia*.

analyzes and hypotheses formulated by the specialists in the field. The accepted aspect of all involved is that the area is part of the **Transylvanian Depression**, subdivision **Tarnavelor Plateau**.

In a paper about the Tarnavelor Plateau [Josan, 1979], the author calls this subdivision "**The hills of Târnava Mică**", a zone that makes the transition from the Mureș Plain, located north of Mureș, to the Plateau Hârtibaciului and Plateau Secașelor, located south of Târnava Mare. In this situation, the Hills of Târnava Mică have transitory characters between the mentioned



Fig. 2. Șilea village on the Josephine Map of Transylvania

The village hearth is located in the river meadow of Șilea Valley on one side and another, located at 10 km. compared to the commune residence and 28 km. towards the city of Ocna Mures. The texture of the village, as it appears on the satellite image (fig.3), is of a type, with a plateau relief, fragmented, due to torrential erosion and landslides, with an altitude of 420-530m. In 2011 the population of the village of Șilea was 319 inhabitants.

The framing of the village area into a geomorphological unit has led to a series of

subunits, which gives them a certain individuality, meaning that in the northern area (between Târnava Mică and Mureș), the morphology of the relief is somewhat similar to that of the Transylvanian Plain, the southern sector (of the two Târnave), the appearance of the relief has some similarities to the one in the Hârtibaci Plateau.

For the most part, these transition features have led to different discussions and opinions regarding the tracing of the boundaries between the Hills of Târnava Mică and the Mureș Plain.

From the hipsographic point of view, the

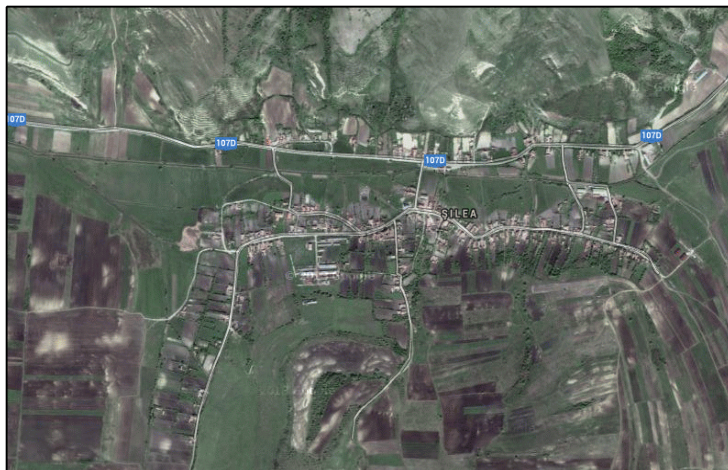


Fig. 3. Satellite image of the village Șilea

reliefs of the Hills of Târnava Mică are tilted from the east to the west, as evidenced by the orientation and slope of the major hydrographic network. The absolute relief altitude values vary between 430 m in the west and 650 m in the east.

Within the Târnava Mică Hills, the main rivers (Mureș, Târnave, Niraj) represent a real depressionary color, which divides the region into large interfluvial spaces, namely:

- The hills between Târnave;
- The hills between Mureș and Târnava Mică
- The Hills between Niraj and Mureș.

In the context of this regionalization, the area of Șilea village is framed in the subunit of the hills between Mureș and Târnava Mică, a subunit with specific structural and morphological characteristics. Structurally, there are a series of tight (anticlinal and syncline) crevices, as well as slides, caused by the salt bodies forming the deposits in Ocna Mureș Hills. The particularities of the relief, due to the geological structure and the presence of well developed valleys, allow the separation of the following subunits of the hills between Mureș and Târnava Mică: Târnaveni Peaks and Ocna Mureș Hills.

The territory of the village of Șilea is classified in the "Ocna Mureș Hills" subunit,

which overlaps the western part of the intersection between Mureș and Târnava Mică. The dominant morphological feature is the advanced degree of evolution of the relief, evidenced by the existence of well developed asymmetric valleys, which form true depressions, such as the Râtul, Fărău or Ozd valleys.

It is worth mentioning, within the subunit of Ocna Mureș Hills, fairly high values of the relief energy, falling within the range of 101-280 m. In the area of the village, as in the upper and middle basin of the Fărău valley, the values of this characteristic of the relief are in the range 241-280 m, which is the maximum values for Mureș Ocna Hills and even for the whole area of the hills of Târnava Mică, values that characterize a rather rugged relief with large slopes favoring gravitational geomorphological processes such as landslides of land and crashes.

Within the subunit it is individualized the **Fărău Depression** where it is located village of Șilea. The general appearance of the depression takes the form of a bay that narrows to the upper basin of the main valley and opens wide towards the valley of Mureș, being framed by well individualized interfluvies, with constant altitudes around 500 m, along which structural or erosion in

the form of peaks or nipples. The orientation of the depression generally follows the current direction of the Fărău stream, being a later depression, carved by the Fărău River and its tributaries, especially the ones on the left, to which the action of the slope processes is added. The Fărău Valley, which forms the axis of this depression, has a very well developed meadow, usually occupying the right bank of the valley and extending extensively into the floodplains of its tributaries. At the base of the straight slope, at the meadow contact, a glaciis formed both by the retraction of the slope and by the accumulation of eroded materials and transported by the old torrential bodies, this being more evident in the village of Șilea, placed on such a glaciis.

In the area of the village there is an ecosystem of *oak forests* in which the faunistic association is represented by the populations of predatory animals, to which are added a few herbivorous species, especially cervid, dominant being the Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), because in the northern area of the village of Șilea there was a *natural reservation* where these animals were protected.

Particular natural conditions, especially due to relative isolation, very varied relief, favorable climatic features and specific natural environment, are arguments for a favorable development of tourism in the future.

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