

## COUNTRY GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL REGION OF NORTHERN TRANSYLVANIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *Northern Transylvania (North-West Development Region) is one of the eight development regions in Romania and is composed of six counties: Bihor, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureș, Satu Mare and Sălaj. In this research, I will analyze the country from a geographical and historical perspective, but especially from an ethnocultural perspective. The study focuses mainly on the integration of Bistrița-Năsăud county into the ethnic-cultural identity of the region. The objectives of the research are the promotion of the ethnographic cultural heritage of the studied region, promotion of local traditions, creation of a tourist product that contributes to the development of the local economy, and promotion of local tourism by connecting ethnographic areas. The anthropic tourist potential, in terms of variety and value, is directly linked to the long evolution of human civilization and the cultural interferences of the ethnic mosaic specific to Transylvania.*

*When we say Romanian rural culture, we are referring to handicrafts, crafts, folk festivals and fairs, etc. We can proudly speak of Romanian culture as characteristic of the rural environment because, in addition to the daily activities characteristics of the rural environment (agriculture, animal husbandry, beekeeping, fishing), crafts and folk traditions are elevated to the level of art. To highlight the ethnographic tourist heritage of the region, we have created a tourist product that unites the ethnographic areas of the region under study, i.e., Țara.*

*Since tourism exploits the originality and originality of things and events, it will find in the treasury of Romanian folklore an inexhaustible source of revelations. In these resources full of deep meanings lies a great opportunity, not sufficiently exploited, of the tourist offer in the region, namely, to provide visitors with a unique tourist product. The recent development of rural tourism in Europe has put us in a very favourable position, as it is mainly aimed at attractions in this category.*

*Genuine folk culture is the preserve of rural life, with traditions preserved and enriched by their creators, and the country is a pole of attraction that must be enhanced through planning, the promotion of celebrations and folk customs so original and traditional architecture and folk costumes.*

**Keywords:** *Ethnography; Tourism; Promotion; Country; Traditions.*

### 1. Introduction

Early state structures had the territorial community as their starting point. Shrines in river valleys or depressions joined together to form the shrine unions. Such formations, formed in geographically defined areas such as depressions, were called valley canes and valley voivodeships. These, in turn, were

parts of "countries", which covered the entire Romanian land, from Oaș to Banat and from there to the Tigheciului Codrii in the eastern part of Moldavia<sup>1</sup>. The earliest information about the early political organisation of the Romanians refers to Transylvania. Three Romanian voivodes are mentioned at the end of the 9th century and the beginning of the following century in the Hungarian chronicle

called *Gesta hungarorum* (=The Acts of the Hungarians). Menumorut's "country" or voivodship in Crișana, with residence at Biharea (near the city of Oradea), the voivodship of Gelu, "Duke of the Romanians" in the Transylvanian plateau, probably centred on Dăbâca, and Glad's country, which encompassed the whole of Banat from the Mure to the Danube<sup>1</sup>.

The penetration and settlement of the Hungarians in Transylvania, which began in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, led to significant changes in the existing social-political structures, interrupting the process of reuniting the "countries" into a unified medieval state<sup>1</sup>. The Romanian form of organisation, the 'țările', proved strong and endured for a long time, giving a particular touch to medieval Transylvania<sup>1</sup>.

Throughout its historical evolution, these people, with ancient origins in these lands, managed to define, preserve, conserve, and transmit to future generations the traditions, customs, songs, dances, costumes, and architecture-specific to the Romanian village, keeping intact its documentary value. This traditional culture represents the emanation of the essence of the spirituality of the Romanian soul, open to those who wish to feel its pulse, to discover and deepen its millenary mysteries to be able to shape a real image of what it represents as a nation.

The territorial area of traditional ethnographic areas was shaped by the economy and social relations of the feudal era, so that we can create a tourism product based on the historical traditions inherited. A truth that many are aware of but very few weigh at its true value: that ethno-folkloric events (represented by the whole range of ethnic-folkloric events organized in rural areas) play a major role in promoting the Romanian tourist village.

Along with the novelty of tourism research in Romanian ethnography, as a "field", our research also involved a novel thematic approach, in which tourism and rural tourism appeared as relevant

anthropological themes<sup>2</sup>.

We felt that studying this phenomenon in the field from an anthropological point of view (about which there were already numerous discourses, images and descriptions in the media and publicity), could provide an understanding of a new type of activity, of how rural communities evolve and develop, and of how pre-existing objects, practices and values are reused in new discourses and activities in which individuals and human groups interact<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, due to the common history and geographic space, we can say that Bistrița-Năsăud county is part of the ethnographic specificity of Northern Transylvania. I will take each ethnographic area within the county, and I will analyze the ethnographic tourism potential to outline a tourism product that contributes to local development by creating the premises for better living conditions in rural areas, but also "fixing" young people in those areas.

## 2. Research methodology

This article aims to integrate Bistrița-Năsăud county into the ethnographic and cultural character of the studied region by exploiting the ethno-folkloric potential of the county, where tourists participate in nature-based activities located in rural areas; the article focuses particularly on the characteristics and features of ethno-folkloric tourism and folkloric events located in tourist villages in Bistrița-Năsăud.

The research objectives are:

- Creating a nuanced image both internally and externally of Romania's advantages as a tourist destination and its traditional tourism brand image;
- To ensure the sustainable development of tourism in such a way that its cultural and heritage assets are equally appreciated today and preserved for future generations;
- Ensuring recognition of tourism as a key factor in the economy and a generator of

- new jobs;
- Promoting the ethnographic cultural heritage (urban and rural) of the study region, promoting local traditions;
  - Creating a network of coordinated tourist information centres in all tourist areas to extend the message of hospitality to guests, providing them with correct information to assist them in orienting, enjoying, and appreciating their destination;
  - To create a tourism product that contributes to the development of the local economy by connecting tourist areas;
  - Creating a database of cultural events to facilitate the promotion of visual and aural arts, especially traditional festivals and folklore events in the ethnographic areas studied.

Proposed Tourist Route: Țara Bistriței-Țara Bârgăului - Țara Rodnei - Țara Năsăudului.

I would like to mention that these ethnographic areas overlap with the counties of the North-West Region, i.e., Northern Transylvania, and there are links between regions where the historical ethnographic areas overlap.

In the realization of the tourist route that constitutes the basis for the realization of an ethnographic tourist product, the historical traditions mentioned in chronicles, works and the ethnic, cultural, and geographical character of the area were considered.

### 3. Defining Concepts

For those who look at them from the outside, they are pastoral manifestations - great shows, but beyond that, they embody those deep meanings on man's relationship with nature, inter-human relations, and his relationship with social life<sup>3</sup>. We can classify them as the parts that best preserve traditional folklore life, because their origin can be found somewhere, far away, in ancient times<sup>3</sup>. To be able to study them from

a scientific point of view, we must clearly define the terminology we use<sup>3</sup>.

Tradition - is the set of customs, traditions and beliefs that are established within social groups and passed down from generation to generation<sup>3</sup>.

Custom - is nothing else than an established habit, common to a people or human community, custom, tradition, ordinance. It is the clear expression that signifies the periodicity of collective behaviour, but also of the way of training, of community acceptance of it<sup>3</sup>.

The customs are unique and original spiritual manifestations of these people and are not the same throughout the country. One of the personalities who has been particularly concerned with this species of custom is Romulus Vuia who, as a professor, has approached this species with a priority role in the classification of the spiritual culture of the Romanian people in the opening lecture of the Ethnography and Folklore course in 1926.

Compared to other authors, he elaborates another type of classification, which is presented as follows: beliefs and superstitions, customs, ceremonies and rituals, customs related to domestic life and customs related to important moments in human life (birth, wedding, funeral). However, in 2003, the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore published a series of volumes entitled Celebrations and Customs, structured as follows: Part I - Family Cycle (birth, wedding, funeral); Part I - Calendar Cycle (fixed-date celebrations and customs; movable-date celebrations and customs; celebrations and customs in the agropastoral calendar)<sup>3</sup>.

Ethnography - the science of observing, analysing, describing, and classifying the particularities of an ethnic community's way of life and form of civilisation. It is the first stage of research into the phenomena and material facts of a community, alongside folklore and the science of folk art (it is not separate science from ethnology), and it

remains at the concrete level of knowledge of social-historical reality<sup>3</sup>.

Cultural heritage is a testimony to and an expression of the values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions that have resulted over time from the interaction of human and natural factors. It is constantly evolving and makes a fundamental contribution to human development and to enhancing the quality of collective life. After all, cultural heritage delights and inspires old and new generations on their journey towards knowledge. It is therefore a treasure to be protected as such<sup>4</sup>.

The traditional Romanian dress represents the clothing of the Romanians on both workdays and holidays. The women's costume is made up of a straight shirt or a shirt to wear on working days, a yoke or a shirt wrinkled at the neck, *catrin e*, *fote*, *vâlnice*, *brâie*, while the men's costume is made up of a shirt, *cioareci*, *i ari*. Footwear, *marams*, handkerchiefs, woollen stockings, obelisks, and ornaments are also part of the traditional Romanian costume<sup>5</sup>.

The dictionaries define, simply and clearly, the region as "a large territorial unit with relatively homogeneous characteristics". Although not as concise, the definition given to the geographical region is quite enlightening: "a relatively homogeneous portion of the geosphere, with specific characteristics (relief, climate, water, resources, economy, etc.) resulting in its own geographical landscape, distinct from that of neighbouring regions"<sup>6</sup>.

Emphasizing the importance of delimiting, characterizing, and classifying regions as a form of spatial organization, territorial subsets or structures of nation-states, four decades ago two French geographers, Paul Claval and Etienne Juillard, stated categorically that: "Geography is the only discipline for which the region is a central notion"<sup>7</sup>.

The concept of sustainable development refers to a type of development policy that aims to meet the economic, social, and

environmental needs of society in terms of well-being in the short, medium and, in particular, the long term<sup>8</sup>.

Tradition is part of the history of a people, and a people that does not know its history is doomed to perdition. If we, the inhabitants of this country, do not know our country, then who will ?

We will pass unmindful of these beautiful customs and only desolation will remain behind us.

#### 4. Bistrița Country

The relief of ethnographic differentiations between certain parts of Bistrița-Năsăud county led to the territorial outline of a few seven sub-areas, four countries with specific geographical, economic, main traditional occupations, historical-demographic, artistic-population<sup>9</sup>.

By considering these criteria, as well as others that will be considered during the research, the ethnographic zoning of Bistrița-Năsăud County becomes the result of a complex scientific operation. A fully conclusive characterization, as well as a fully appropriate delimitation from a territorial point of view, of the ethnographic countries that make it up, will undoubtedly only be possible at the end of the research and studies being prepared for the county ethnological monograph<sup>9</sup> (fig. 1).

Bistrița's country presents some aspects of material and spiritual culture as more complex, explainable on the one hand by the more pronounced presence of the neighbouring nationalities, and on the other hand by the existence of the old city of Bistrița, the county seat. It forms a central sub-area, surrounded only by sub-areas of Bistrița-Năsăud County. It consists of two communes in the Budac Valley - Cetate and Budacul de Jos, then the commune of Livezile and the town of Bistrița in the valley of the same name, as well as the commune of Dumitra situated on the Dealul Tîrgului<sup>9</sup>.

Historical research highlights the



Fig.1. Ethnographic Zone of Bistrița-Năsăud County  
(Source: Ethnographic framework and zoning by  
Nicolae Dunăre, p. 189)

following phases of the population: the colonization of the Saxons in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, later adding to the town of Bistrița a Hungarian population.

The Romanian population has always been present both in the countryside and in the city of Bistrița. Except for the villages of Ragla and Budacul de Sus, which were part of the Năsăudean border, the other localities belonged to the Saxon district of Bistrița. The village of Sărata was for a time in the domain of the fortress of Unguraș under the Moldova suzerainty<sup>9</sup>.

In rural areas, besides the traditional main and secondary occupations, specialized forms of agriculture were practised, such as viticulture in Viișoara, Dumitra and Livezile, as well as orchards in almost all localities. Throughout the Middle Ages, craftsmen's guilds operated in Bistrița, almost exclusively made up of Saxon craftsmen,

who produced household, clothing, and ornaments for the entire population of the surrounding area, reaching as far as Moldova and Bucovina<sup>9</sup>.

After the abolition of the guilds, crafts could be embraced to a greater extent by Romanians and Hungarians, the markets remaining the same<sup>9</sup>.

To be as simple and efficient as possible to visit, we have divided Bistrița, the main centre of Bistrița County, into three tourist axes:

#### / Crown Axis

This axis includes many historic houses. For example, the Silversmith's House, which once belonged to a guild of jewellers. The facade of the building was designed by the town's own Evangelical Church mason. Also on this axis is the Church of the Minorite Monastery, the oldest building in the city, built by Franciscan monks, known today as

the Orthodox Church of the Crown, and the Municipal Park;

/ Axis of Arts

On the Axis of the Arts are the Small Square, Central Square, Republic Boulevard and Butchers' Passage. One of the imposing buildings on this axis is the Palace of Culture, then historical monument houses including the Petermann House, the Andreas Beuchel House, the Parish House of the Evangelical Church, the Evangelical Church, the Sugălete Sirul, the Evangelical Gymnasium, today the "Liviu Rebreanu" National College.

The Sugălete Ensemble, located in Central Square, the square surrounding the Evangelical Church, is the longest row of medieval buildings with ground-floor arcades in Romania;

/ Axis of Guilds

On this axis, there is the Roman Catholic Church, the Dogars Tower, the Dominican Monastery (today a home for the elderly) and fragments of the enclosure wall belonging to the Medieval Fortress of Bistrița.

By far the one that catches everyone's attention is the town's imposing landmark building, the Evangelical Church, which boasts the tallest medieval stone church tower in Romania. The church preserves within its walls the 23 flags of the medieval guilds of Bistrița, as well as an over 500-year-old organ in perfect working order. At the end of today's foray, we take the church elevator up to the tower to enjoy the panorama of the city.

On this trip, we also set out to discover the Bistrița wine trail. The Lechin vineyard is the queen of vineyards in these parts. The Jelna winery tells the fascinating story of the wine used centuries ago as currency. And the youngest winery in Bistrița-Năsăud, Crama Valea Ascunsă in Teaca, wants to revive the tradition of good wine.

### ROMANIAN FOLK COSTUME

Over time, the garment takes on social significance, becoming a way of knowing rank and hierarchy. The ornaments,

materials, colours and tailoring become elements of the costume through which society interprets the wearer's membership. The coat also conveys emotions and feelings<sup>10</sup>.

Deciphering the social message of the folk costume involves a careful reading of all the existing signs (shapes, colours, accessories, etc.). The folk costume also communicates national data, as each people wears a traditional dress and flag, both of which have the same symbolic value<sup>10</sup>.

As a utilitarian element, the costume is related to geographical and climatic conditions, occupations, and crafts. As an ornamental element, it is linked to the most important ceremonies in the wearer's life. The folk costume is one of the most important forms of culture of a people, and many studies have been carried out on its basis: its historical genesis and main stages of evolution, contemporary forms and their area of spread, its originality with the costume of other peoples, its contribution to the process of genesis of a people<sup>10</sup>.

The general features of the Romanian costume have the same similarity throughout the country, with differences of course in details, with changes in shape, tailoring or just the way of using the hair and ornaments. Its essential feature is its unity in variety, the different costumes being characteristic of the respective regions and areas. According to specialists, the traditional Romanian folk costume has gone through different stages throughout history<sup>10</sup>.

Raw material: The raw material from which the traditional costume was made was wool, hemp, flax, cotton and borangic<sup>10</sup>. Ornamentation The main element in the ornamentation of the Romanian costume consists in the way of decoration, both in terms of placement and composition of the motifs, which are placed in certain spaces. In general, the ornamentation of the costumes is geometric, stylizing forms of natural inspiration, such as birds, flowers, and animals<sup>10</sup>.

A special place is given to the symbol of the cross, ornamented and stylised in many forms, as well as other religious symbols: the fish, the Byzantine cross, the ladder of life, the vine, the wheatear, the grape, the peacock, etc. The embroideries that decorate folk costume objects help to preserve the unity of the costume.

They were created by the peasant who drew inspiration from her environment, from everyday life<sup>10</sup>. The essential thing was how the ornament was arranged on the white cloth, thus providing a balance between the different ornamental fields and a good aesthetic taste<sup>10</sup>.

The specific chromatic element of the Romanian costume is the chromatic element, characterized by sobriety and balance in the use of colours, in their harmonious combination, resulting in colour effects of good taste and artistic refinement. The basic colours are black, red, dark brown, blue, green, and purple<sup>10</sup>. The colours of the Romanian folk costume are characterised by harmony and freshness, the colours being combined aesthetically. The colours obtained by vegetable dyeing were warm and non-contrasting. With the advent of industrial dyes, the colours began to be stronger, more contrasting<sup>10</sup>.

### **The folk costume of Bistrița Country**

In the Bistrița area, the costume with a Zadié with a black body and a shirt with a tassel has evolved in different directions, being replaced by flowery, brightly coloured costumes, shirts without a tassel, with small or no-frills and shapes above the elbow<sup>11</sup>. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this form of the costume was gradually abandoned<sup>11</sup>. The Țara Bistrița shirt is notable for the simplicity of its ornamentation<sup>11</sup>. Made on the farm from hemp or cotton cloth, the ornate registers are found only on the collar or sleeves<sup>11</sup>. Stitching is done on the sleeves above the elbows and on the edge of the skirts, there is cipca (home-made lace)<sup>11</sup>.

At the new shirt time, the ornate motifs are geometric, evolving from shapes to floral

forms stitched in many cases with small coloured beads<sup>11</sup>.

The old shirt has ruffled neck folds and neckline, open at the front<sup>11</sup>. Sewn at first with lapels, it gradually loosens and becomes a short shirt (cept)<sup>11</sup>.

The trim is simple, with stitching above the elbow, down the sleeve and at the neck. The sleeve ribbing is embroidered in the step-over-thread technique. The sleeve is finished with needlepoint fodori and chip. The sleeves are simple, made from three or four layers of cotton cloth or a mixture of hemp and cotton<sup>11</sup>.

A small black leather breastplate is worn over the shirt, the old type of pattern being the sunken one. The development process of breastplates has included three eras, according to the colour of the background leather: white leather on which the register was sewn in black, brown leather and the last era, that of black leather<sup>11</sup>.

On the last two, the registers were stitched with red or grey on the edges, the breastplates are hemmed with lambskin or black primrose the stitched motifs are floral, on the back of the breastplate there is a wreath<sup>11</sup>.

Like many costumes from the North-West of Romania, the zadié is not girded at the waist with a belt but with ropes, the long narrow sticks woven from wool have a simple ornamentation<sup>11</sup>. Zadié or pânzeturî were presented in several ways they are defined according to the disposition and colouring of the stripes that make up the main decorative element<sup>11</sup> (fig. 2).

The evolution of the cloths had several phases the first phase is formed by the red cloth, 50 cm wide, woven from rough wool dyed in house. The second phase is the soft pile cloth with more intricate ornamentation<sup>11</sup>. This one is narrower and has one or more rows of flowers at the bottom.

This category also includes the zadié without stripes, the background in one colour (black or auburn) and the bottom 30 cm long



Fig.2. Model of a folk costume from Bistrița Country  
(Source: <http://acasalaromani.ro/costumul-popular-din-zona-bistritei/>)

with motifs chosen in warp or embroidered with a needle<sup>11</sup>.

At the bottom, the front zadia has spikes or tassels in different colours, the colours of the ornamental register were red, blue, gold and marble<sup>11</sup>. The quilts were worked in loom and wicker in purl. Over the purl were stitched motifs with cotton in crosses or half crosses<sup>11</sup>.

The back of this back of this type has wider or narrower stripes and often there are flowers among the stripes<sup>11</sup>.

The third version of the canvas is made of new hair, also called paired canvases. They are narrower in shape, with horizontal and narrow verges<sup>11</sup>. Between the verges, embroidery of coloured beads and lame thread frequently appears<sup>11</sup>.

The traditional men's costume in this part of the country consists of a knee-length white shirt made of hemp or cotton, white trousers made of linen, hemp, or wool (in winter), and boots (in summer) and boots (in cold weather). In cold weather, the Năsăudean peasant wears a wide leather belt, breastplate, or suman. The shirt has national

motifs sewn on the collar and a kind of lace, popularly called *cipcă*, on the sleeves. On the head, he wears the hair cloche, in the Năsăud area, and on holidays, village boys can be seen wearing peacock hats, a black hat decorated with peacock feathers, strings of beads etc<sup>12</sup>.

It is worth mentioning the similarity of the traditional men's costumes between the Bistrița, Bârgăului and Năsăudului and Rodna countries, this similarity is due to the historical, cultural, and ethnographic belonging.

The practice of rural tourism and agritourism relies primarily on the accumulation of goods and treasures in the heart of the village and on rural practices that enhance the productive resources of the estate. To these are added the landscape component, combining the natural elements with those transformed by man, and the skill of the local population in offering quality tourist services<sup>13</sup>.

In rural tourism, the specificity of the local architecture and the accommodation base is essential in building the image of the



brand and in reassuring tourists' expectations<sup>13</sup>. As their tastes become more refined, because of experiences at home and abroad, their demands increase and the ability of tourists to distinguish between what is authentic and what is borrowed and has no local representational value develops<sup>13</sup>.

Rural areas are characterised by specific structural and functional dimensions, which have had impact over time on the way of life of the population, in social-economic and cultural terms<sup>14</sup>.

Traditional rural or folk architecture

Bistrița-Năsăud/Albești Bistriței county, Biertan in Bistrița-Năsăud County Sibiu);

- the gable of the house faces the street and is provided with shuttered windows and a large gate through which access to the inner courtyard is gained; access to the house is directly from the street or from the inner courtyard (fig. 3).

Opened in 1998, the Saxon House Museum in Livezile presents to the public essential aspects of the Saxon civilization in the Bistrița area. The Museum of the Saxon House of Livezile was founded based on the

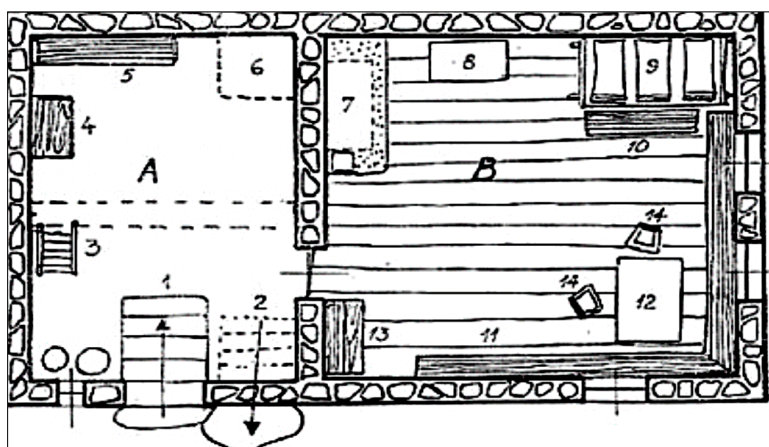


Fig. 3. Model of a Saxon house organization

A-porch; B-room for living; 1-stair access; 2-basement stairs; 3-loft box; 4-flour box; 5-sink; 6-sink; 7-built-in cupboard; 8-clothes chest; 9-high bed; 10-supporting bench; 11-dowry bench; 12- table; 13-pottery basket; 14-plank seats.

(Source: Architecture and Tourism Ioan Băca, p. 137)

bears the imprint of the close link between man and his living environment and comprises a set of buildings, with different functions, represented by dwellings, outbuildings and technical installations<sup>14</sup>.

Transylvanian Saxon folk architecture Feature<sup>14</sup>:

- building materials: wood, stone, brick;
- the shape of the house is square or L-shaped, with 2, 3 or 4 rooms;
- the roofs are made in two or four pitches, with thatch or reed in the Middle Ages, and tile in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- the layout of the houses is parallel or perpendicular to/on the axis of the main street (e.g., Livezile, Dorolea in

collection of objects of Ioan Rusu from Livezile<sup>15</sup> (fig. 4).

It is a complete household: house, barn, stable, with a Saxon specificity in the architecture of the house and the way of displaying the household annexes<sup>15</sup>.

The household annexes, the barn and the two stables next to the house exhibits are grouped by functional categories: "guillotines" for cutting beets, grinders for grinding cereals, barns for storing cereals, grape presses, tools, installations related to the domestic textile industry: huskers, hives, spinning machines, etc.

## 5. Bârgău Country



Fig.4. The Saxon House in Livezile

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, "county" means "a larger territory which in the past constituted an administrative unit", "place, region, area", "country", "region", "large territory with certain specific characteristics (climate, relief, economic resources) or "administrative- territorial unit within a state<sup>16</sup>. Thus, the term "Land" has the same meaning and therefore it can refer to Țara Bârgăului having the same meaning as inutul Bârgăului.

We define by "Bârgăului Land" or Bârgăului Country as the geographical area located in the southern part of the Bârgău Mountains, overlapping the middle and upper morpho-hydrographic basin of the Bistrița Ardelene, with its two major tributaries: Bistricioara and Bârgăul.

The concept of the "Bârgăului region" is not used by us for the first time. It also appears on other occasions in various documents<sup>16</sup>.

Țara Bârgăului is not an isolated area, but a well-integrated territorial one, which is closely linked to the neighbouring physical and mental spaces, namely Țara Năsăudului, Țara Dornelor, Valea Mureșului and Țara

Bistriței, since ancient times<sup>16</sup>.

Within Bistrița-Năsăud County, Bârgăului County represents a micro-region of development, with a social-economic and cultural position strengthened by the Bistrița-Prundu Bârgăului-Piatra Fântânele-Vatra Dornei axis, which crosses it and connects Transylvania with Bucovina and Moldova<sup>16</sup>.

This axis currently fulfils the function of a development corridor of rank Ib32 and is characterised by certain historical dimensions, which confirm its evolution and importance, which we point out below<sup>16</sup>:

- at the junction of the Bârgăului, Le ului and Ilvei river basins, on the DN17-Guraului Gombei stream mouth-Prislopului Façade-Dosul Zâmbroaiei-Culmea Tășuleasa-Culmea Opcioara-Iliuța Corchi-D1. Ingrădit-Iliuța Calului-Măgura Calului there is a fragment of an old road called by the locals the Roman Road, which still raises some questions about its ancient or Josephine origin, but it was certainly used in the 18th and 19th centuries as a link between Bucovina, the localities of the Bârgă valley and Bistrița;

- in 1778 the stagecoach line opens from Budapest, via Beclean-Bistrița-Bârgăului-Defileul Poștei-Piatra Fântânele-Măgura Calului, to Bucovina;
- in 1780, by order of Emperor Joseph I, the construction of the road along the Bârgău valley, linking Transylvania and Bucovina via the Tihu a Pass, began, which was opened in 1812 and completed (paved) in 1820, during the reign of Emperor Francis I (Borgo Road or Francis Road);
- between 1915 and 1939, a narrow-gauge "petrol-electric" railway ran from Tiha Bârgăului to Dornișoara;
- in 1969 the road on the Bârgăului valley is asphalted and enters the national road circuit as DN17.

Here, then, are a few examples that illustrate the concern of the authorities of the time for the development and use of this connecting road in the valley of Bistrița Ardelene and Bârgăului. The building of the road in question had a major impact on the human communities here because axis-type geographical spaces attract and rapidly distribute flows of matter, energy and information. This will continue to be a key factor in the coming period, as Bârgă County follows the path of sustainable development<sup>16</sup>.

Therefore, within the axis, the following functional categories of settlements stand out, which will support this process<sup>16</sup>:

- / the village of Prundu Bârgăului, the commune's residence, as a local centre of attraction, support pole or growth pole of VI B rank, which stores part of the currents of matter, energy and information and redistributes them to the localities within the axis;
- / Colibița and Piatra Fântânele villages, as centres of tourist attraction with agro- touristic and residential functions;
- / the villages of the municipality (Joseni Bârgăului, Bistrița Bârgăului,

Tiha Bârgăului);

/ related rural localities.

Now, the communes of Țara Bârgăului have been co-opted into the LAG Federation of the Bârgău-Călimani Rural Development Area, together with the communes of the Budac Depression. On this occasion, numerous projects will be launched to access European funds for the social, economic, and cultural development of these localities<sup>16</sup>.

Due to its geomorphospacial position, Țara Bârgăului represents an interface at the contact between the Bistriței Hills, the Bârgăului Mountains and the Călimani Mountains, which reinforces the geographical relations between these areas and is reflected in the landscape diversity: hilly landscape on the western side, at the contact with the Bistriței Land, landscape of intrusive magmatic meadows on the northern and eastern side (Heniu, Ocala, Zâmbroaia, Tășuleasa, Frumușaua, Căсарu, Măgurița-Arșița, Dl. Arilor, Cornu, Buba), landscape of domed plains in the Piatra Fântânele area (Zâmbroaia area), landscape of the Bistricior massif, modelled on volcanic rocks, landscape of plateaus (bâci) and ruiniform ridges modelled on volcanic agglomerates, on the southern side (Culmea Dl. Negru, Culmea Cușma, Culmea Pietroasa, Culmea Tătarca, Culmea dintre Șoaima, Culmea Pietrei lui Orban, Culmea Piciorul Scurt-Țiganca, Culmea Moldoveanca-Poiana Cofi-Dl. Calului, etc.), the landscape of gorges (Bârgău, Bistricioara), the landscape of the Colibi a depression etc<sup>16</sup>.

Țara Bârgăului represents a well individualized geographic-historical entity, a unanimously recognized physical and mental space that revolves around its own identity. By its geomorphological configuration, it is a valley land, dominated by intrusive magmatic meadows and ridges shaped by volcanic and volcanogenic - sedimentary formations, individualized at the interface between Mr Bistriței, Bârgăului Mountains and Călimani Mountains. Its boundaries, even if in some sectors they are given by geomorphological

alignments, have been established historically and administratively.

Therefore, the morpho-hydrographic limits do not coincide with the administrative ones<sup>16</sup> (Fig. 5).

From a social-economic and cultural

Thus, the city of Bistrița is a regional pole of attraction, Prundu Bârgăului is a local pole of attraction, and the Colibi a and Piatra Fântânele tourist areas are the polarisation points<sup>16</sup>.

One of the most beautiful and exciting

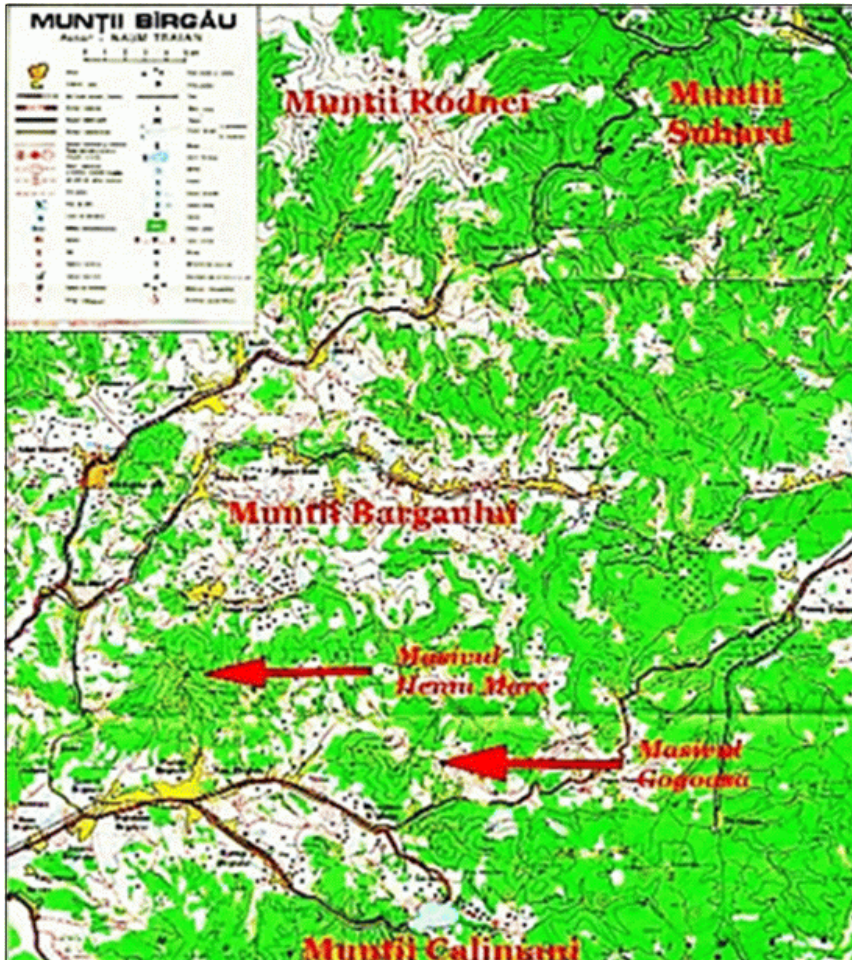


Fig.5. Geographical boundaries of Bârgăului County

(Source: <http://nicolacristianbadescu.blogspot.com/2013/10/munti-bargaului-varful-heniu-mare-si.html>)

point of view, Bârgăului County is a corridor that supports the links between Transylvania, Bistrița County, Dornelor Country and Bucovina, a fact underlined by the material, energy and information flow that have been circulating on this alignment for centuries. It is an open and complex polarised system.

traditions in the area is the wedding, which has become a real spectacle over the years. Year after year, the "Bârgău Wedding Wing" takes place in these villages. Tourists who come to the area in winter will be delighted to admire the riches, the callers, the horse-riding stewards, and the giving of the

hen, which have made marriage a ritual in the true sense of the word.

Another unique tradition in Romania is the bread from Țara Bârgăului, the locals take pride in the fact that nowhere else is such a dough baked: kneaded in a 300-year-old loaf tin according to the usual recipe, but after it has been left to rise for an hour, it is enriched with unusual ingredient bacon, then baked in ovens specially built for bread<sup>16</sup>.

Bârgăului Valley or Țara Bârgăului has certain traditions in tourism, such as<sup>17</sup>:

- Colibița climatic resort (late 19<sup>th</sup> century - 1976);
- winter sports and Hotel Tihu a (now Hotel Castel Dracula);
- the campsite and the Străji Valley cottage (built in the 1970s);
- the feast day of Piatra Fântânele Monastery (formerly St. Elijah, now the Nativity of the Mother of God)
- The King of the Brails country festival in the Bârgăului Gorge.

At present the tourist infrastructure of the Bârgăului Valley is relatively well developed, being represented by<sup>17</sup>:

- access roads: DN 17-E58 (Dej-Bistrița-Vatra Dornei); DJ 173 A (Prundu Bârgăului- Bistrița Bârgăului-Colibi a);
- accommodation structures: cottages, guesthouses, hotels, restaurants;
- recreational objectives: the Colibi a lake, the ski slope of Piatra Fântânele.

Also, two villages with balneological and climatic tourist and sports functions were created: Colibi a and Piatra Fântânele. These are already two tourist attraction poles of local and regional importance, which are shaping their identity as tourist brands<sup>17</sup>.

The tourist exploitation of the Bârgăului Valley or Bârgăului Country is foreseen in all Local Development Strategies of the municipalities. Some strategic actions have already been implemented, such as the development of rest and picnic areas (Bistriței Ardelene Gorges, Gura oimului, Valea Străji, etc.), cultural events (Folklore

Caravan in Colibița, Colibița Folk, Garlic Festival in Piatra Fântânele, Wedding Festival on Bârgău, International Folklore Festival King of the Brails in Prundu Bârgăului, Days of the localities) and sports events (Colibi a Bike Fest, controlled rafting on Bistrița Ardeleană) etc. Other strategic actions could be<sup>17</sup>:

- marking the tourist routes in the valley, which overlap the Călimani and Bârgău mountain areas (e.g., Prundu Bârgăului-Fundu Secului-Heniu Mare);
- placing tourist direction signs on different tourist routes (e.g., to the mineral water spring at Piatra Fântânele);
- placing information boards at the entrance to various tourist routes (e.g., Roman Road) or in the centre of the villages in the valley, which continue brief information about the administrative structure of the communes, area, number of inhabitants, tourist attractions and routes, etc.;
- creating events linked to specific calendar dates, local customs, and traditions (e.g., Winter Holidays, Easter Holidays, Pentecost, St. Elijah's Day, Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Drying of the Dry Land, Sâmedru, Sheep's Day, Snow Festival at Piatra Fântânele, etc.);
- encouraging private initiative for the development of rural tourism and agritourism;
- building tourist information centres, especially in Prundu Bârgăului, Colibița and Piatra Fântânele);
- to carry out surveys for tourism service providers to improve the methods of organisation and provision of tourism services;
- improving the quality of tourist services at the level of each accommodation unit;
- classification of tourist accommodation facilities.

Architecturally building materials: stone for the foundation, wood (beams, planks, posts, floorboards, etc.) for walls and roof,

lime, and clay for plaster (mixed with manure, wheat straw and chaff); -architectural programme: dwellings, household annexes (shed, stable, hutches, shed for wood materials, corral, field houses, huts, pews), technical installations (vats, mills, gates)<sup>18</sup>. The plan of the houses is square or L-shaped, with variations: house with two, three or more rooms; compact household (room, shed, stable; room, shed, stable, corral), houses in fields or borders (room, shed, stable; room, shed, stable, corral); -roofs are built in two or four layers, with a shingle roof; - architectural sub-styles: Some Valley and Rodnei Mountains, Ilvei Valley, Bârgă Valley and Bârgă Mountains, Sălău ei Valley, ieului Valley, Ili ua Valley and ible ului Mountains etc<sup>18</sup>.

## 6. Rodna Country

Along the Some Mare River, Țara Rodnei includes the communes of Feldru, Maieru, and Rodna. Sant, five other communes on the Ilvei Valley: Ilva Mică. Leșu, Măgura Ilvei, Ilva Mare, Lunea Ilvei, as well as the town of Sîngeorz-Băi famous for its mineral waters<sup>19</sup>. As the above enumeration shows, the localities of this sub-area penetrate along the valleys to the heart of the Rodna mountains in the north and the Bîrgă mountains in the south-east<sup>19</sup>.

### Traditions and Cultures

Situated on the side where Dacia sets to the north and where "a long line of mountains formed of rocky cliffs and covered on their summits with dark forests, rise up into the sky with their high ridges. On these, wise nature has set them as a boundary and an unconquerable defence wall between enemy kingdoms", the Rodna Country, situated on the Somes Mare, towards the mouths of the rivers, is a very rich folklore area, but its folklore richness has not been sufficiently well highlighted in a unified way, although this area has been in the attention of systematic folklore collections.

It is thus recognised that an

ethnographic area is defined by the similarity of significant cultural features: the type of settlements, houses and traditional outbuildings, costumes, occupations, folklore traditions, customs, and language etc<sup>20</sup>.

The Rodna area is a very complex folkloric area, we find all Romanian folkloric species, even if today they have become part of the passive folklore, in these contexts we consider that the Rodna Valley is an ethno-folkloric unit with specific features, but also with some elements common to Romanian folklore. Within the framework of this ethnographic and folkloric area and its geographical position, its links with other folkloric areas, we will seek to analyse the folklore of the Rodna Valley<sup>20</sup>.

I have chosen to write about the traditions and customs of the Rovinț celebrations, noting with regret that some of them have disappeared. The folk costume has disappeared, and unless efforts are made to preserve it, future generations will be deprived of the traditions of the Romanian people. Those areas that were lit up on feast days, the " ețătorile" where young people combined work with fun, those traditional weddings with horsemen and hula-hoops waving flags to the rhythm of music; some of them are still preserved today, although they have undergone some changes<sup>20</sup>.

Therefore, I wanted to write in detail about the games and customs of the Rodna celebrations as they used to be<sup>20</sup>.

The beer game, or beer, as it was called, was a custom in which the young men of the village took part with the girls of the village, but married people also participated. Two or three friends would agree to organise the game, find a large house, negotiate the price, and hire the players, who were the Cetera, the contra la and the Gordana. Later the accordion and target were added. The organizer was called the brewmaster and the others were called helpers<sup>20</sup>.

The beer game started on Christmas Day and lasted 6 to 9 days, with the feast days, if Christmas Day fell on a Sunday, there were

fewer beer days. The beer game started around 2 pm and lasted until the evening when everyone went to lunch and came back around 8 pm and lasted until around 2 am. Men paid a fee, and girls were free to enter but had to perform certain services.

These services differed from one locality to another. Over time they have changed even within the same locality. In some villages, the boys who organised the beer went around on New Year's Eve with the plough to all the girls who came for the beer. They were obliged to receive the plough and pay. This way, the money obtained was used to pay the musicians, if necessary. In other places, the girls who came to the beer were obliged to offer a meal to a musician, so the musicians ate at the girls' houses<sup>20</sup>.

It was known in advance which girl was going to the table, and in other places, the musicians' table was provided by the beer organizers, and the girls paid half as much as the boys or contributed food to the musicians' table. In the old days, it was part of the musicians' payment to bring them a cart, two, of firewood each.

The fee for participants was different, those who paid for all the beer days paid a lower amount for the total days, it was like a subscription. Next were those who paid per day, per night or per day- night. The first game was free. After the second game started, the music was stopped, and an invitation was made to either pay or leave the game. The same thing happened to those who came later<sup>20</sup>.

During the summer, when there was no fasting, the game was held on Sundays, but only during the day, from 2 pm until evening. The folk game on Sundays and holidays was an opportunity for both young people and their parents to get together. Any girl who came to the Sunday game was obliged to play with the boy who invited her to the game, otherwise, the game was stopped by the one who refused and announced that the girl in question should leave the game, and the musicians played a

march, at the sound of which the girl together with her mother left the game. Not infrequently, arguments broke out between the boys who came to the defence of the girl and the boys who asked her to leave the game<sup>20</sup>.

The most important game was the "Spinning Game" composed of two distinct parts in tempo and rhythm: "De-a mano" and "De învârtit". The game "De-a mano", a game of pairs, is the introductory part of the Romanian game on the Somes river in which the pairs for the second part "De învârtit"<sup>20</sup> are fixed.

This game offers an opportunity to spectators, especially mothers of girls and boys who play with whom because the first game is decisive, it is appreciated in the village world as a proof of friendship of the boy for the girl that he "puts in the game" from here drawing certain speculations for the future of young people<sup>20</sup>.

It is a first attempt to model the steps for the second part of the game. This part of the game consists of the so-called wearing. The boy is inside the circle and the girl is outside the circle, some better players spin when they go forward, the girl three times, and when they come back once. This part of the game is poorer in shouts, but there are nevertheless shouts specific to this part among which we mention<sup>20</sup>:

*That's the proud one from back then Who  
salts the hams*

*And to sweet lips; That's the one from the  
back*

*Who salts the oxen And to the soft lips.*

After a spin or two around the playground, a boy shouts

*Day, gipsy, to spin*

*That we fed by hand!*

The second "Spinning" part is a much more spirited part, in which after a few movements to the left and right, the pairs spin around, with one "supporting" leg in the middle and the other one rotating. The rotation can be the full length of the musical scale or only halfway<sup>20</sup>. In this part of the

game, the pairs face each other, with the boy having his arms on the girl's middle or shoulders and the girl resting her arms on the boy's shoulders and rotating to the right or left. Sometimes it was played "gipsy-style" by some boys who were more playful<sup>20</sup>. This game consisted of a trot, and the girl would break away from the boy<sup>20</sup>. The melody did not differ from that of the "spinning", being only variants of some of the main games in the local folklore repertoire<sup>20</sup>.

This part of the game is full of shouts, some of the love, some satirical, all showing a good party mood, and the shouts are often a collective emanation, with many participating. There are many shouts of the game, so their role is as much for those who know how to shout, for there can be no game without shouting<sup>20</sup> :

*Darling whom I'm playing with  
It smells like basil,  
Darling whom I'm jumping with  
It smells like a cauldron  
This girl plays well  
And it teaches me too;  
She teaches me to play  
I teach her to kiss.*

The game "Elijah Talbure's Wheel" is also a game of two, father and son who are caught behind each other's backs and play in cadences 1, 2, 3. The game is based on those shouts that not only give the game charm but are indispensable in the game. It is the shouts that give the game colour and organise it because the players have to follow the commands given by one who knows the game better<sup>20</sup>:

*Green leaf topaz,  
Come on, come on, you little girls,  
Whom you know, whom you can,  
Who no longer remain.  
Come on, boys, let's play,  
Let's do the big wheel!*

Another game was the "Shouting Shout", a game of shouting girls that depends on the knowledge of shouts and the power of improvising shouts of the players. The shouts start with an enumeration<sup>20</sup>:

*"From one to one  
Don't mess with the crazy,  
From one to two  
La lelea con poale noi"*

The folk costume in the Some area of the Rodna Mountains is very similar from one village to another since the localities had a common historical development.

Tourism is one of the important development alternatives for the Rodna Country, the potential for development and diversification of the field is shaped by the network of natural and cultural tourism objectives.

Situated in the fabulous territory of the Rodna Mountains and benefiting from the proximity of tourist attractions in this area and having a wide variety of relatively well-preserved traditions, the commune has all the arguments to be listed on the important tourist routes (fig. 6).

#### **Tangible Cultural Heritage Objectives**

The Orthodox parish church complex in Rodna commune (Bistrița-Nășăud county), comprises the ruins of a medieval building and the present Greek-Catholic church, a hall-type construction with a polygonal altar and buttressed walls, dating in its present form from 1859.

The Catacombs of Rodna are said to reach as far as the neighbouring village of Anie, about 3 kilometres away. It seems that hundreds of Rodnians died in these catacombs during the Tartar invasion of 1241.

The Rodna Fortress or Castle Church of Rodna, built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, was part of the defensive system in north-eastern Transylvania to stop invasions by the Tatars or Cumaeans, as well as to stand in the way of military interventions from Moldova.

The ruins of the Dominican Monastery and the "Writers' House" complex at Valea Vinului, built around 1900, which will soon be restored.

Ethnographic and Mining Museum organized by the former Rodna prison



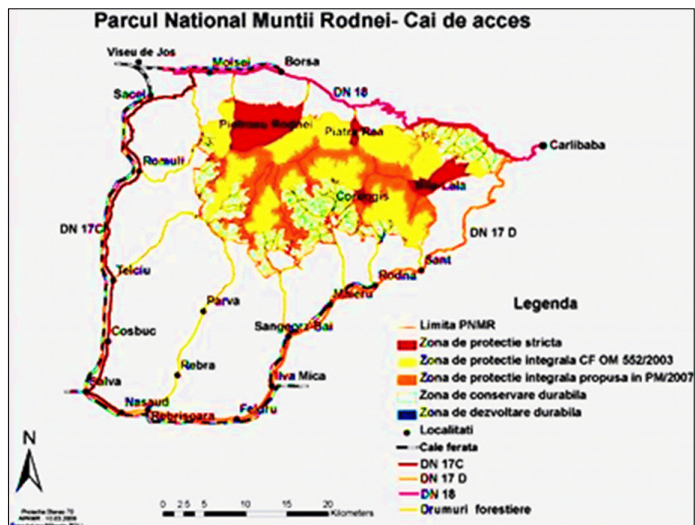


Fig. 6. The tourist area of the Rodna Country  
(Source: <http://www.romaniaturistica.ro/parcul-national-muntii-rodnei>)

building, comprising the sections: "History", "Mining", "Florian Porcius", "Agriculture and agricultural tools", "Ceramics", "Popular Port", "Peasant House".

Tourism facilities and services infrastructure comprise the sum of facilities and services intended for use by tourists and visitors to the area.

The main accommodation and catering facilities in the Commune of Rodna are:

- Rodna - 1 hotel, 3 cottages and 2 guesthouses;
- Valea Vinului - 3 pensions.

## 7. Năsăud Country

From Someșul Mare to the ridge of the Rodnei mountains in the Maramureș region. Țara Năsăudului comprises four valleys - Zagra, Sălăuța, Gersa, Rebra - which flow into Someșul Mare<sup>21</sup>.

The communes of Nimigca, Salva are located on the Someș river meadow. Rebrioara, as well as Năsăud, connected with others located on the side valleys<sup>21</sup> (fig.7).

The Zagra commune is in the valley of the same name, the Sălăuța valley shelters the communes of Coșbuc, Telciu and Romuli,

and the Rebrei valley shelters the communes of Rebra and Parva.

Apart from Nimigca de Jos, where Hungarians hold 2/3 of the population, and the town of Năsăud, where some Hungarian families are found in various craft and administrative occupations, the population of this country is Romanian<sup>21</sup>.

Showing certain similarities with the ethnographic sub-area Ciceu-Beclean, the Năsăudean folk costume has developed in a more pronounced way in some specific pieces, like<sup>21</sup>:

- / long turtleneck suman;
- / loose-fitting underwear for men, beautifully embroidered long shirts for women as well as men;
- / hat with a large brim and large peacock feather.

### Customs and Traditions

The Mocod's Crai is a custom that is part of the cycle of popular spring celebrations, being related to the "Ploughman", "Tânjaua" and "First to plough", agrarian ceremonies practised in the Maramureș area. George Coșbuc, referring to the origin of the "Crailor", said that it is a specific warrior custom, recalling the way primitive peoples

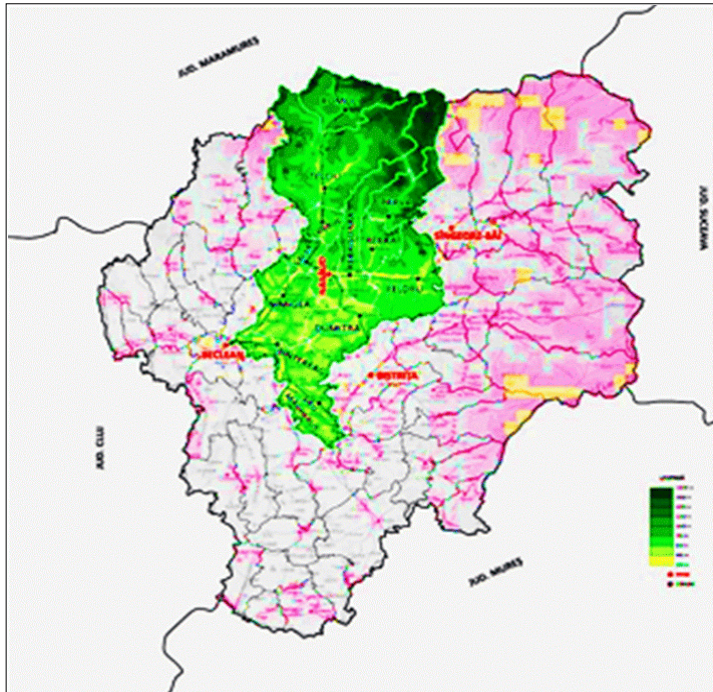


Fig.7 Geographical boundaries of Năsăud County  
(Source: <https://www.taraNasaudului.ro/?pag=strategia>)

chose their chiefs at the spring equinox. In Năsăud County, the "Crailors" custom is present only in Mocod and is performed during the three days of Easter celebrations<sup>22</sup>.

The wheat wreath is the celebration of the harvest at the end of the harvest. The custom of the harvest wreath includes the following stages: weaving the ritual object, wearing the wreath at the host's house, the communal meal, and the playing of the wreath.

The Năsăud area constitutes a centralising nucleus of the custom. Here the wreath is richer because of the large size of the spikenard braid and the beauty of the wreath songs accompanying the bringing of the ritual object.

This custom has been preserved in a broad framework involving the entire village community<sup>22</sup>.

Telciu, being in the valley of the river Sălău a, the muse of George Coșbuc's

inspiration, enjoys a great folklore variety and a lively folk song<sup>23</sup>.

Although there was no special concern to collect the old songs, customs, and traditions until Valeria Peter Predescu, however in Telciu, Bichigiu, Find and Telci or there is still a priceless treasure of folk songs that have been passed down from generation to generation through the grapevine or on festivals, weddings, rites etc<sup>23</sup>.

Wedding in Telciu, as in almost all the villages of Năsăud and Bistrița, includes a complex of customs that accompany marriage.

The bride and groom are the protagonists who, together with the parents and godparents, play a key role in preparing and performing the wedding<sup>23</sup>.

The wedding is an event of great joy not only in the family of the young people but also in the village obsession, the whole village because most weddings are invited by

a large part of the village families. Before, 200-300 years ago, in the early 1910-the 1920s, invitations were made verbally. The groom and the bride went together to the houses of the guests.

Invitations were also made by the parents. Now invitations are written, after the call to the church has taken place. They are usually given out at least a month before the guests are invited so that they can prepare themselves<sup>23</sup>.

The wedding sometimes takes the form of a unique show, in which solemn moments are combined with moments of sadness, as the young bride and groom part from their maidenhood and their faces, as well as those of play and good cheer<sup>23</sup>.

The scene where the wedding takes place in the village: the church, the bride and groom's houses, the wedding hall, the godparents, the cemeteries, and the cemeteries, respectively the bridesmaids and groomsmen, each with precise roles in preparing and carrying out the wedding<sup>23</sup>.

The wedding at Telciu comprises two distinct parts<sup>23</sup>:

- a) Preparatory actions: petition and Tomala
- b) The wedding itself: the call to the wedding, the flag, the wedding ceremony, the wedding and the marriage ceremony, the religious wedding, and the wedding party with the festive meal, the "Gainsi" shout, folk and good cheer games, the shout to the messengers, the zester box and the closing of the wedding after 1-2 days.

It's a habit that has nothing in common with heavy drinking. The way diners are prepared in Telciu is specific to the village and to a few others in the Nășăud area. Refined alcohol, brandy, or even plum brandy of over 52-55° strength is prepared with dry sugar (cumin) and melted sugar, burned in an enamelled pot on the stove<sup>23</sup>.

Ginars are prepared in the family and are usually consumed at home on Saturdays and Sundays, when coming from working in the fields, logging etc.

Ginars are served in the family, among close friends, in small glasses of 30-50 ml, during which time all sorts of plans or balance sheets are drawn up, depending on how things went during the period in question<sup>23</sup>.

In Telciu the sheep taming, or sheep cheese dipping, takes place in May, when the flocks are settled, the mountains where the banks and cowherds go, along with the shepherds<sup>23</sup>.

Each farmer at the announced date, at the place of assembly of the sheepfold, before leaving for the mountains, attends to the sheepfold associated with the sheep, milks them and, according to the quantity of milk is determined based on carâmb, how many mniertuc is and what share of cheese is entitled to receive during the summer.

More specifically, the number of quotas he receives is determined. Here, at the place where the stall leaves for the mountains, a real party takes place. Food is brought and drinks are served. The famous balmo is also prepared<sup>23</sup>.

Sheep owners hand over their sheep to the shepherds for receiving. In the evening, the feast ends with the thanks of both parties<sup>23</sup>.

The history of Salva beaded liqueur - produced by Angelini - began in 1918, when my grandfather, an Italian - at that time there was a wave of Italian migration - came to Romania and settled in Salva, near Nășăud. My grandfather had two hobbies and occupations at the same time: he made wagon wheels and cognac. He also left us his first boiling kettle, which you can still admire today<sup>24</sup>.

The name of the brand - "Sage Beaded Grappa - produced by Angelini" was given after the name of the family, the town where this small business was developed and the beads, which represent the strength of the grappa. To test the strength, you must shake the bottle well. If it's 50 degrees, the liquor makes beads, and from the moment you shake it until you count to 50, the beads

shouldn't disappear. It took me 7 years to register this brand, I made a lot of investments, but I'm very glad I succeeded<sup>24</sup>.

The fruit we need comes from our own production, from over 80 hectares of orchards that we have taken under concession. We don't spray the trees, so everything is 100% natural. It's easy to check: if there are no flies in the borage tubs, then the juice is not natural. Where flies appear, it's natural. We invite you to come and see what our casks look like, to see the traditional production process and to taste it, 'hot off the press'<sup>24</sup>.

At the distillery we work as a family, we have four copper cauldrons, as is our custom, in which we produce between 10 and 15 hectolitres per year.

We make brandy from Bistrița plums - the best for brandy - from pears, apples and quinces, all of which are well-ripened, so that we can offer you the best quality products, 50 proof, as much as the law allows us<sup>24</sup>.

It's cool, but it can get cooler. If consumed in moderation, by the glass, not by the bottle, brandy is real medicine. Especially for the heart, we recommend plum brandy<sup>24</sup>.

Becoming the Homeland of Folk Costume, Năsăud County can boast two world records attested by Guinness Book in 2017 - the largest gathering of people dressed in folk costume (9643 people) and the largest Romanian traditional game (9506 people).

### **MAIALUL the celebration of Năsăudean costumes, songs, and games**

For over a century, the students of Năsăud schools have been celebrating the "Maialul" in the beautiful month of flowers, which has become a traditional celebration of the students and the entire population of the town, which nowadays highlights the costumes, songs, and dances of Năsăude and Somas.

Unlike the traditional architecture of the neighbouring county (Maramureș), the architecture of Năsăud County was poorer in decorative elements. However, with greater possibilities to buy wood, the villagers renovated their courtyards, so that few representative houses from past centuries have survived.

Traditional House on the Țibleș Valley Fitted out and Donated by Bishop Macarie Drăgoi The museum in the middle of Spermezeu village, Bistrița-Năsăud county, is the latest in situation conservation achievement, which entered, through its official inauguration on August 21, 2017, on the occasion of the celebration of the consecration service officiated by Metropolitan Andrei Andreicuț of Cluj and Bishop Macarie Drăgoi of Northern Europe, in the network of heritage values of Bistrița-Năsăud county, representing the culture and civilization at the foot of the Țibleș Mountains.

It is a peasant farmhouse, built before the Second World War, typical of the interwar period, consisting of a dwelling house, large barn and stable, to which, in the 1950s and 1960s, the summer kitchen with bread oven was added. The house belonged to the Deneș family and was bought by Bishop Macarie Drăgoi, decorated, and decorated by His Beatitude, then donated to the Museum Complex in Bistrița<sup>25</sup>.

In the first room were gathered and exhibited wedding ritual objects placed left and right, with dozens of ethnographic photographs, giving a glimpse of this ritual-ceremony taken from George Coșbuc's poem, with wedding flags from the villages of Spermezeu, Coșbuc, Suplai, Poienile Zagrei and Breaza, the multi-coloured "stained" wedding bands and the wedding cokes, decorated with red nacre, of the stegari and Druze callers of the weddings of yesteryear<sup>25</sup>.

To these are added the large wedding basket given by the bride and groom to the bride and groom and a huge basket of wedding tree cakes.

The bride and groom's traditional 1970s attire can also be admired on two mannequins. The bride's rich hairdo with its old-fashioned curled hair or shawl ("crest" model), on which several white crowns are placed, decorated with flowers, mirrors and pearls<sup>25</sup>.

Not missing behind the bride's head is the green beard wreath (with tricolour ribbon), hung over the place where, after taking the bouquet, the bride's bridal hair was placed. The bride's braided tail was left untied ('so that she may bear children easily'), and the bridal train worn around the bride's waist was later, at the beginning of the wedding feast, offered as alms, under the table, to a little child who was gently pulled by the ears ('so that the new wife may have good children<sup>25</sup>).

The mountain area belonging to the northern group of the Eastern Carpathians represents the highest sector of the continental eruptive chain Oaş-Gutâi-Văratec- Tibleş. The tourist area of the massif map also includes the Lăpuşului Mountains (also known in the geographic-touristic literature as the Văratec Mountains, after their main peak-Văratec - altitude of 1358 m), a link in the hike on the ridge of Gutâiului and Tibleş.

Geographically, the Tibleş Mountains represent a well-defined mountain unit, occupying an area of about 260 sq. km, delimited to the north by the Maramure Depression and to the south-west by the Lăpuş - "Lăpuş Country"; the eastern limit of the massif is firmly marked by the Salva-Vişeu gorge, starting from the Şetref Pass (817 m altitude), on the Sălăuţei Valley, and the western one by the springs of the Lăpu and Botizei valleys that separate ible from the Lăpuş Mountains; in the southern area, the Năsăud and "Țara Năsăudului" hills cross the Someş Mare depression.

Mineral springs with chemical compositions specific to volcanic mountains (carbonaceous, sulphurous, ferruginous) frequently occur in natural springs -

"borcuturi" - being found in the valleys of Find, Arcerului, Izvorul Arinilor, Izvorul Rău and Izvorul Tibleşului.

Rural tourism or agrotourism is practised throughout the region, being an area with high natural and ethnographic potential.

A visit to the farms and stables of the villagers brings to tourists the charm of tradition carefully preserved over decades.

The area also offers fishing and hunting enthusiasts the opportunity to practice these activities under professional supervision.

## 8. Conclusions

Ethnography from a tourism point of view, highlights an ethical value, a continuation of an ancient tradition among the new elements of contemporary tourism. For tourism, traditional resources are the basic elements through which it can achieve its recreational and educational goals and thus become cultural and ecological tourism.

The region's treasures of folk art and its folkloric traditions are in no way inferior to the scenic beauties and natural riches of this county, together constituting the early dowry of the people of Valli - integrated into the national heritage and giving the county a distinct personality.

Wherever you enter Bistrița-Năsăud, you are greeted by a specific ethnographic setting, a cultural and folkloric area that is still alive and original". The county's ethnography and tourist development.

Rural tourism or agrotourism is practised throughout the region, being an area with high natural and ethnographic potential. A visit to the farms and stables of the villagers brings to tourists the charm of tradition carefully preserved over decades. The tastings of local products will spoil any gourmet to the max. The carefully preserved and practised crafts delight the eye of art and beauty lovers. The area also offers fishing and hunting enthusiasts the opportunity to practice

these activities under professional supervision

The traditional cuisine, particularly tasty, is little emphasized in the restaurants of the region but is well preserved. Among the most popular traditional and cultural products are Beard cheese and sour milk, smoked cheese and boiled bacon from Zagra, raw sheep's milk and kneaded sheep's cheese, povila from Bîrgău, plum and other fruit brandies, mushroom sauce, various pickles, blezdruga, stew, local farm, cozonaci and many other delicacies that give flavour to the specificity of the various areas of the county. Stonemasonry and woodworking are traditional occupations in the area. The valley without road links across the moun-

tains preserves an authentic traditional architecture, perhaps the best preserved in Năsăud County. The covered bridges at Ilva Mare and Ivăneasa, the latest in a series of architectural structures that combine engineering and art, in structures that are rare for Transylvania and Europe, may delight those who appreciate originality and the unusual.

The Country Geographical, Historical and Ethno-Cultural Region of Northern Transylvania is a tourist product that highlights the cultural heritage and ethnographic areas of the county.

Bistrița-Năsăud is integrated into Northern Transylvania through its culture, ethnography, history, and geographical space.

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