

A GEO-HISTORICAL APPROACH ON THE FORMER RURAL SPACE NOW MANAGED BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF LUGOJ: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS, EVOLUTION AND POST- SOCIALIST FEATURES

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Abstract: *A Geo-Historical Approach on the Space Now Managed by the Municipality of Lugoj: Historical Considerations, Evolution and Post-Socialist Features.* The municipality of Lugoj, beyond its own urban space, manages from the administrative perspective, two small settlements with some special and particular characteristics. The identity of this space is given by the evolution of these human communities and, moreover, by their close links with the town. This article, as a part of a large research work focussed on the post-socialist urban restructuring of the municipality of Lugoj, analyses some problems regarding the former rural space integrated on the municipality of Lugoj. The main important aim of this article is represented by the highlight of the main features of the two small settlements as an outcome of their historical evolution during the layers of time which, certainly, marked the structure, the evolution, the functionality as well as the landscape belonging to them. The global overview started from ancient times to present days, trying to reflect the behaviour and the identity of these communities as an outcome of the different ways of life succeeded in this part of Romania in connection with the whole historical evolution of the entire Banat. Moreover, this paper presents the main changes of the settlements of Tapia and Măguri in order to understand the evolution of them from a geographical perspective. This work illustrates the main features from the post-socialist period in order to understand the ways in which these communities adapted to the new mechanisms of the market economy. The methodological background followed a sum of scientific methods and procedures with the scope to reflect objectively upon the reality of this geographical space taken into account. Apart from the main contemporary characteristics of the rural space managed by the municipality of Lugoj, this paper shows the main relations between the two mentioned small settlements and the town.



Rezumat: *O abordare diacronică asupra fostului spațiu rural administrat astăzi de municipiul Lugoj: considerații istorice, evoluție și caracteristici post-socialiste.* Municipiul Lugoj, dincolo de spațiul urban pe care îl administrează, cuprinde două foste localități rurale, care prezintă o serie de caracteristici distincte. Identitatea fostelor comunități rurale este generată de însăși evoluția spațială și temporală a acestor așezări și, mai mult decât atât, de legăturile permanente pe care acestea și le-au construit cu municipiul Lugoj. Acest articol, ca parte integrantă a unui studiu mult mai amplu centrat asupra procesului de restructurare urbană din municipiul Lugoj, încearcă să analizeze o serie de probleme referitoare la fostul spațiu rural administrat de către acest oraș. Scopul central al lucrării este reprezentat de evidențierea celor mai importante aspecte geografice ale celor două așezări (Tapia și Măguri), ca urmare a evoluției istorice și a succesiunii diferitelor perioade de timp, care au marcat, în mod direct, structura, funcționalitatea și peisajul celor două comunități. Perspectiva globală a analizei, din perioadele cele mai îndepărtate și până la contextul post-socialist contemporan, încearcă să evidențieze comportamentul și identitatea localităților componente, ca rezultat al diferitelor moduri de viață și a tipurilor de societate guvernate de sisteme politice și culturale distincte, la fel ca la nivelul întregului Banat. Mai mult decât atât, dar în același cadru de referință, lucrarea de față încearcă să ilustreze schimbările și dinamica celor două foste sate cu scopul de a înțelege corect evoluția geografică a localităților studiate. De asemenea, articolul dorește să reflecte trăsăturile post-socialiste sub raport spațial, structural și funcțional pentru a înțelege în mod obiectiv felul în care cele două comunități s-au adaptat la noile mecanisme ale economiei de piață. Designul metodologic aplicat a urmărit un complex de metode și tehnici cu scopul de a încerca să redăm cât mai bine realitatea spațiului geografic luat în studiu. Nu în cele din urmă, dincolo de evidențierea caracteristicilor contemporane ale fostului spațiu rural administrat de municipiul Lugoj, lucrarea de față încearcă să evidențieze principalele relații dintre spațiul localităților Tapia și Măguri și cel propriu-zis al orașului Lugoj.

Key words: *municipality of Lugoj, former rural space, Tapia, Măguri, post-socialist period.*
Cuvinte cheie: *municipiul Lugoj, fost spațiu rural, Tapia, Măguri, perioada post-socialistă.*

1. INTRODUCTION

From an administrative perspective the former rural space included on the urban management of the municipality of Lugoj is represented by the localities Tapia and Măguri. Considering the criteria regarding the size of the settlements, they are included in the category of the small and medium rural settlements (with up to 500 inhabitants, for instance Tapia and between 500 and 2000 inhabitants, Măguri).¹ Both settlements depend today on the urban management of the municipality of Lugoj, having a compact structure and a functional profile based mainly on the agriculture.

From a historical perspective, Tapia reminds us by the historical events from the times of the Dacians and the Romans, as for instance, the famous battle from Tapae (Crețan, Frățilă, 2007, p. 17; Crețan, 2006, p. 12). Măguri represents nowadays the only settlement from Timiș County with a human capital dominated by the Roma populations even if in the past its inhabitants were in their majority Romanians. The first documentary mention of Măguri village is considered to be attested since 15th Century (Crețan, 2007; Crețan, Frățilă, 2007, p. 16; Crețan, 2006, p. 12). In the same context, according to another

¹ According to classification from *Geografia României*, Vol. II, 1984, Edit. Academiei Române, București.

source there is assumed the fact that the documentary attestation of Măguri is in 1758 during the time of Maria Theresia. At that time The Roma population had no right to set in the area of Măguri village as it was prohibited by the local administration especially in the proximity of German Lugoj (Crețan, 2007).² The main problems of this community occur by the particular ethnic structure dominated by the Roma population and also, by the social and economic context of this village. The amplitude of these ones, more increased after 1990, retained the attention both of the local authorities and also of some researchers from different fields of activity. In connection with this last aspect, we mention the works of Crețan (2007) and Crețan, Jucu (2005), focused on the Roma communities from Banat and South Crișana, with a particular case-study concerned on Măguri.³

Regarding the functional profile, both settlements depend on the local urban management of the municipality of Lugoj, the relations between these spaces being ensured by the daily fluxes of people to and from the town. The movement of the people is for residence, for work, school and for different other services offered by the town and not present in the two belonging settlements. At the same time, even if there is a primary school in Măguri, the educational units are not present in Tapia, the children from here studying in the schools of Lugoj. This feature implies, for instance, daily commute which is facilitated by the local public transport of the municipality of Lugoj. Similarly, this service also sustains other movements of population for other services and work, feature which ensures direct spatial and functional relations between Tapia, Măguri and Lugoj. The evolution of the former rural space managed by the municipality of Lugoj, from the old local traditions to the contemporary trends of the post-socialist reality, is based on such types of links between the former villages and the town

The methodological flow: the paper is based on a complex methodological design grounded on the different methods and procedures which complete each other. The bibliographic study represents the main scientific demarche for understanding the evolution of the two former rural communities. In this regard, several sources were consulted such as books, articles, dictionaries, atlases, as well as articles from the local media.

On the other hand we used data and information from the local institutions databases and also, from different others available statistics. The geo-historical approach was mediated by the method of the maps comparison while the demographic analysis was based on the view of the different statistics. To the quantitative methods we add qualitative ones and for an objective rendering of the former rural reality, the cross-field examination, as well as, cross-field observation represents the main scientific procedures which complete the methodological design of this analysis.

² The German Lugoj was a distinct settlement in Banat formed by the colonization of Germans and set during the 18th Century on the left bank of Timiș River in the proximity of the Romanian Lugoj (a distinct settlement which already existed). Later, in the end of this century this German community would fusion with the Romanian Lugoj and form a single settlement called Lugoj (for further readings see Mureșan, 2007, Voiculescu, 2004, Luchescu *et al*, 1994, Stratan, Muntean, 1981, Luchescu, 1975).

³ For more details, see Crețan, R., Jucu, S., (2005), *The geographical and historical evolution of roma population from Banat and Crișana Regions*, în *Analele Universității de Vest din Timișoara, Seria Geografie*, vol. XV, 2005, Timișoara, pp. 107-122; Crețan, R., (2007), *Marginalitate socială și spațială: conceptualizare și tipologie în cazul Rromilor din Banat și Sudul Crișanei. Studiu de Geografie istorică și socială*, Edit. Universității de Vest, Timișoara. Crețan, R., Jucu, S., (2005).

2. DEMOGRAPHICAL EVOLUTION AND THE REAL ESTATE CAPITAL FROM THE SPACE OF THE VILLAGES TAPIA AND MĂGURI

The human capital of the two studied settlements is relatively low, the total number of the inhabitants ranging between 1000 and 2000 residents. The largest share is in Măguri village, which presents the following situation: in 1977 there were 896 inhabitants, in 1992, 825 inhabitants and in 1997, 805 inhabitants. From the ethnical perspective, in 1900 there were 335 Roma, in 1992, 735 Roma, and in 2002, 1678 Roma (included here a part of the Roma from the hearth of the city).⁴ The increase of this ethnic group is due to the enlargement of the town to the south and to the Mondial Industrial Unit. The evolution of Roma population between 1900 and 2002 is illustrated by the Figure 1 in which we can observe a continuous trend of the numerical growth of the Roma. The trend is more amplified and even rush after the fall of the old comunist regime.

The Roma families are numerous and comprise between 5 and 15 members. This is due to the Pentecostal religion which provides greater family nuclei. In terms of ethnic composition with the Roma - which assume a share of 80.7%, there are joined by Romanians (15%) and Hungarians (4.3%). This is illustrated in Figure 2. In the village, from linguistical perspective, the Roma population speak Romani language (830 inhabitants) and Hungarian (865 inhabitants). The structure by religion is represented by 857 inhabitants as Pentecostals and 630 inhabitants as Orthodox. Generally, the speakers of Hungarian are adherents of the Pentecostal religion (Crețan, 2007, p. 101).

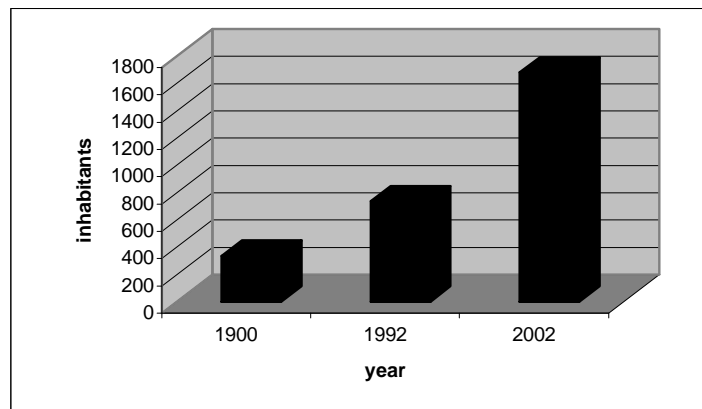


Figure 1: The evolution of the Roma (Gypsies) in Măguri between 1900 and 2002
(Source: Crețan, 2007)

⁴ According to Crețan, 2007.

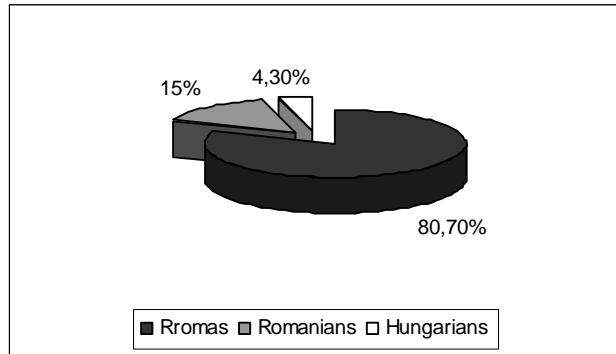


Figure 2: The ethnic structure of the population from Măguri (Source: Crețan, 2007)

In 1996 in Măguri there were 175 residential buildings of which 170 had only ground floor and five of them had ground floor and two floors. Of these, most of them have three rooms, followed by houses with two rooms and one room respectively. Only few houses (8) have a structure with five or more rooms. There are 169 families, with a habitable surface area per capita of 9,15 square meters. The evolution of the housing capital after the building period is represented by the Figure 3. It is noted that most buildings are built between 1960 and 1980, the year after their number strongly decreased. The quality of the local housing is shown in Figure 4, highlighting the fact that almost half of them is good, followed by those with a medium quality. Only 4% characterized unsanitary housing (according to *General Urban Plan of Lugoj, 1996*).

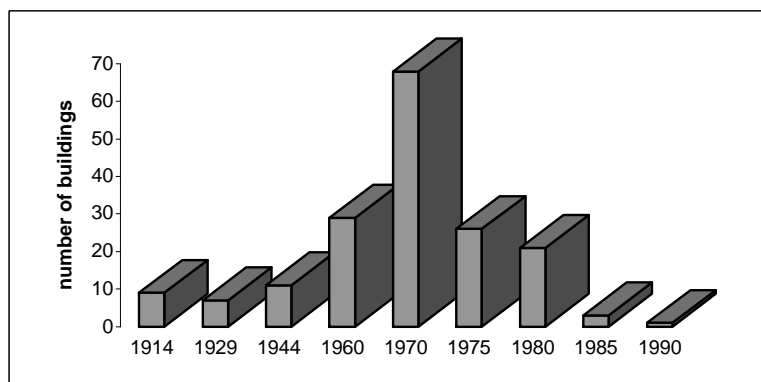


Figure 3: The evolution of the number of buildings after the period of construction in Măguri (according to *General Urbanistic Plan of Lugoj, 1996*)

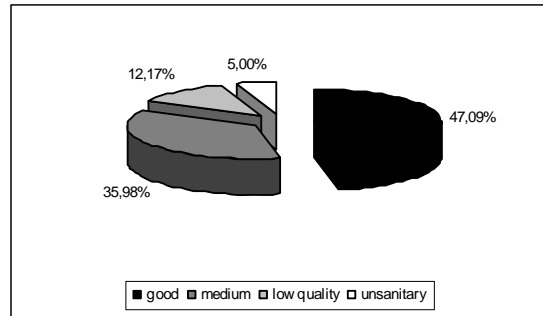


Figure 4: The quality of the real estate capital from Măguri (according to General Urbanistic Plan of Lugoj, 1996)

The locality of Tapia had, in 1977, 586 inhabitants, in 1992, 372 inhabitants, in 1997, 363 inhabitants and in 2002, 357 inhabitants (the complete evolution of the demographical dynamic is illustrated in Figure 5). In this settlement there is a decrease in the number of population due to low birth rates and also to the definitive movement of the population to the town. Now it is estimated the fact that the population of this village can register an increase due to the Roma ethnic group (about 50 persons) who built houses on the space of this locality (Toma, 2010). From a confessional perspective, the inhabitants from Tapia were almost entirely Orthodox, the rest of them being adherents of other religions.

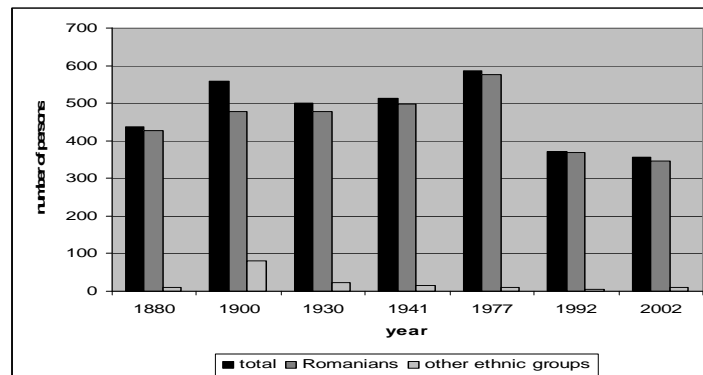


Figure 5: The evolution of the demographical resources in Tapia and the structure based on the ethnic groups (Source: Tapia, *Timiș Wikipedia The Free Enciclopedia*; accessed on september 2009, november 2010; Varga, 2002⁵)

⁵ Varga, E, A., (2002), *Statistică, recensăminte după limba maternă și naționalitate, județul Timiș, 1880-1992; Temes megye településeinek etnikai (anyanyelvi/nemzetiségi) adatai 1880-1992.*

Concerning the real estate capital, there are 148 residential houses in Tapia, of which only two constructions disposing by the second floor, the rest of them having only ground floor. The situation of housing size and quality of the buildings is represented in Figures 6 and 7 (according to the *General Urban Plan of Lugo*, 1996).

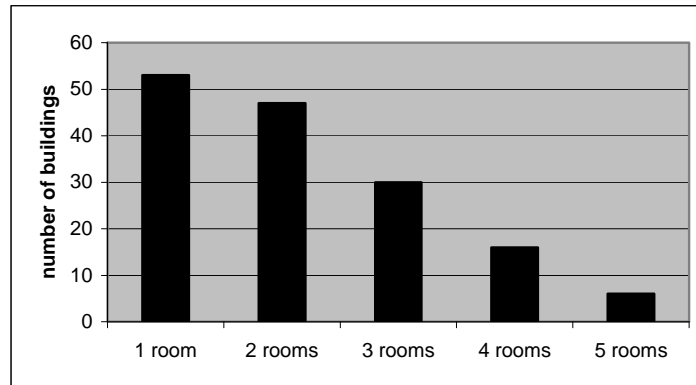


Figure 6: The quantitative situation of the houses based on the number of rooms at Tapia (Source: *General Urbanistic Plan of Lugo*, 1996).

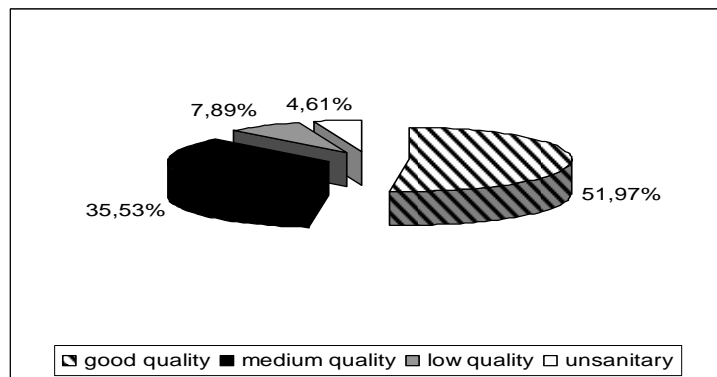


Figure 7: The qualitative situation of the houses at Tapia (Source: *General Urbanistic Plan of Lugo*, 1996)

In terms of housing, construction based on the period of built in Tapia, the most numerous buildings were built between 1960 and 1970 (Figure 8). The number of the constructions has declined since 1975 knowing a strong decreasing until 1990; for example in 1992 only one house was built in Tapia. The explanation may be generated by the presence of the poor people who do not have enough income to build new houses and, on

the other hand, the village does not present a great interest for other residents to build a home in this rural settlement, although the price of the land is relatively low.

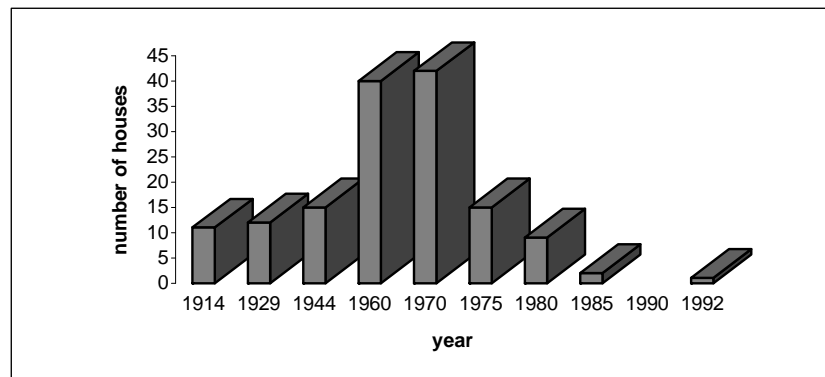


Figure 8: *The situation of buildings for living based on the period of built (Source: General Urbanistic Plan of Lugoj, 1996)*

Located at a distance of about three kilometers from the town, on the Lugoj foothills, Tapia - which included also the village of Armadia - depends on the municipality of Lugoj from a functional perspective. The process of the population decline seems to be balanced by new residences which can contribute to the increase of the number of residences. However, with all its documentary attestation in ancient times and with all forces of the contemporary waves of globalization, the settlement retains some traditional farming practices and, at the same time, local traditions and specific cultural values.

Similarly, the village of Măguri, attested in 1448, with a population less numerous than 1992 of about 12%, preserves important traditions and cultural values particular for Roma population, for its ways of life and for this type of communities. Măguri also knows a process of population decrease but the Roma residences still remain dominant.

The way in which the inhabitants of these spaces have marked, transformed and built the landscape of the rural settlements is reflected by the spatial structure of the former villages and, moreover, by the spatial planning interventions, by the main productive activities and by the functional profile of the settlements. This last one, based on the subsistence agriculture still reflects the difficulties faced out by the Romanian space in its efforts to adapt to the new trends of the market economy.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE HEARTHS OF THE SMALL SETTLEMENTS BELONGING TO LUGOJ

The two settlements administrated by the municipality of Lugoj present an assembled structure with grouped houses and households. These ones are located linearly along the roads and, generally, each house has a courtyard. The households are complex, their space being extended behind the residential buildings. In terms of their morphology,

these settlements are typical of the rural ones located in the plain regions. For the agricultural activities practiced by the inhabitants, the geographical location of them plays an important role through the contact of the plain with the hills which provide the complementary of the local resources.

The estate is situated around the hearth and includes a wide variety of subsistence crops. The pasture areas are used for breeding and sunny slopes are proper for the vine crops. The localities' hearths are well outlined and their built area stands well on the structure of the villages. This last one was influenced by historical, social and economic factors, but an important role is assumed by the natural ones which influenced the evolution of the pattern of the rural hearths.⁶ The thickening of the housing is proportional with the age of the former rural settlements, the streets pattern being more or less regularly. The grouped housing of the rural housing represents a specific characteristic for the Banat Plain. In this context, there are also integrated the former rural settlements managed today by the municipality of Lugoj, even if they are located on contact with the hills. The linear and mono-linear structure is specific for Tapia, Măguri and Armadia this type of spatial planning reflecting the link between the evolution of them and the main features of their substructures. Thus, we can observe the expansion of the former rural hearths throughout the main roads which provide the contact with the town.

The evolution and the development of the spatial structure of the villages from the geo-historical perspective reflect the spatial spread along the main roads. For the analysed villages the spatial dynamics can be observed by the shapes illustrated in Figures 9 and 10 for Tapia and in Figures 11 and 12 for the village of Măguri.

The maps present the structure of these rural localities in a comparative approach between the 18th century reality and the specific one for the contemporary post-socialist period. In both cases the development and the extension throughout the main roads is obvious. The spatial growth of the rural settlements was slow but continuous, that is why the villages preserve many features in terms of their current functionality materialized in primary occupations for subsistence as well as for the daily life of the inhabitants.

⁶ According to *Geografia României. Geografie umană și economică*, vol. II, 1984, Edit. Academiei Române, București; this factors of grouping process of the rural habitat are distinguish also by Ianoș (2005), as well as by Șandru, Aur (2009)



Figure 9: The position and the structural form of the village of Tapia on the Josephine Map of Banat from 1769-1772 (Source: Tapia, Timiș, Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia, accessed on September 2010)

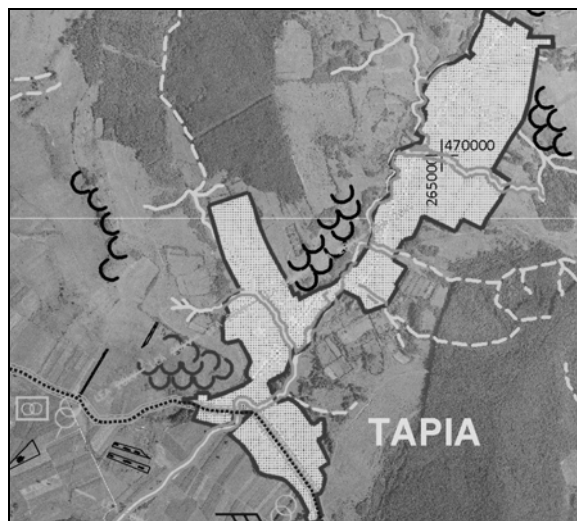


Figure 10: The structure and the form of the hearth of the village of Tapia (according to the map from the Urban General Plan of Lugoj, 2009)

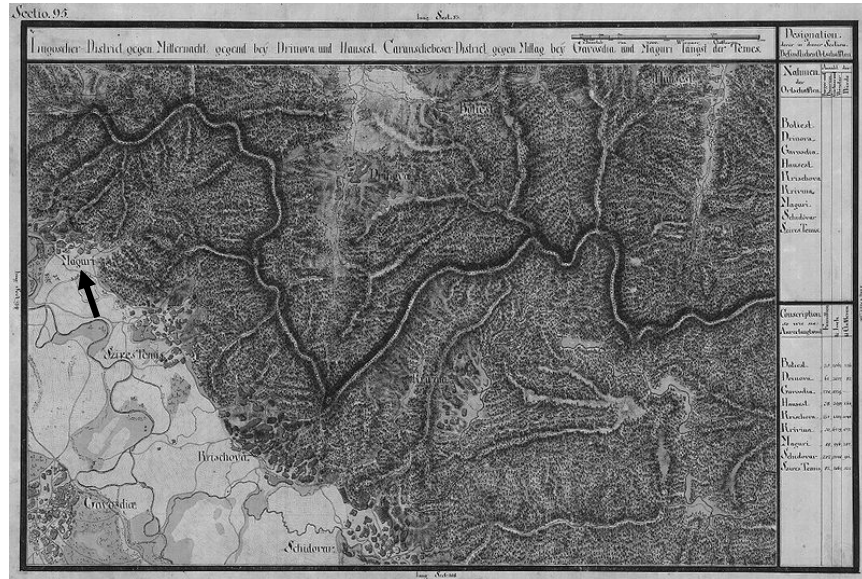


Figure 11: The position and the structural form of the village of Măguri on the Josephine Map of Banat from 1769-1772
 (Source: Tapia, Timiș, Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia, accessed on September 2010)

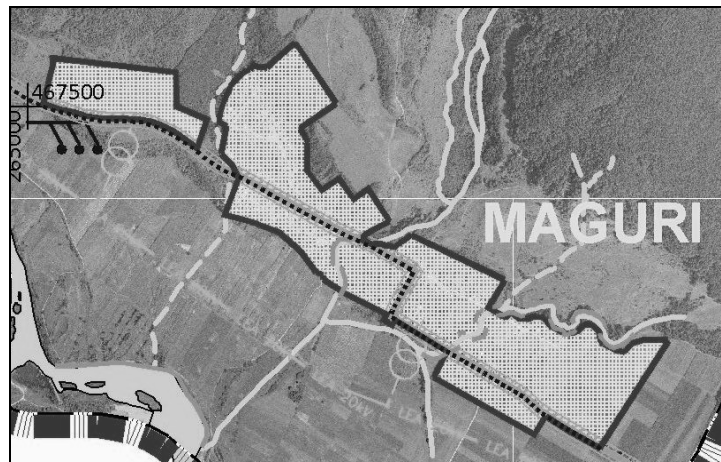


Figure 12: The structure and the form of the hearth of the village of Măguri (according to the map from the Urban General Plan of Lugoj, 2009)

4. THE FUNCTIONAL PROFILE OF THE FORMER VILLAGES

The main occupations of the former rural population are determined by two distinct aspects, that is the traditions which have survived in the countryside and the urban influence of the town of Lugoj. Thus, in Tapia, Armadia (as a small village later incorporated) and Măguri, the most important economic activity is represented by agriculture.

At least the agricultural occupations concerned to the urban market supply are less dominated in the former rural communities prevailing activities which ensure the primary goods and the food for the local residents. On the structure of the crop plants there are detached vegetables, root crop, potatoes, cereals (corn) and fruits. The hilly area is favorable for the cultivation of vines but this opportunity is low or not valorized. In the households the livestock, as a current practice, is present mostly for the own consumption of the residences. Animals such as pigs, cattle, sheep and poultry are grown only for the own consumption. From the economic perspective, a part of the population of these former villages works in the economic sectors of the town. The labour force coming from these villages is engaged in various industrial units from Lugoj (Mondial, Rieker, Autoliv etc).

A special case presents the residents from Măguri, especially the Roma population. Among the traditional crafts in this village there have been preserved many old and specific occupations as brazier, brick-man, musician, blacksmith, horse dealer, and the jobs determined by the proximity of the city sanitation worker, tailor, shoemaker, mason, welder etc.⁷ There is a balance between the share of traditional crafts with modern ones. The number of employees in the city is low, so the authorities have developed programs to promote industrial units with the aim of absorbing the rural labor and to create favorable conditions for integration of this demographic capital in the urban community. However, it is important to note that a main feature of the resources of work is assumed by the international migration for work, undoubted reality for the contemporary post-socialist period which tends to become a “*common one*” (Dimitriu, Ungureanu, 2007, p. 7). The main countries which absorb the rural labor force from these villages are Italy, Spain, Germany, France, Hungary etc (Jucu, 2010). The migration to these countries has facilitated many contacts with Western Evangelical churches (Crețan, 2007) which influence the way of life of the inhabitants in terms of their cultural identity and spiritual assertion.

Another important role in shaping the functional profile of the rural settlements has had the historical stages and the layers of time through which all these former rural communities passed. In their most, the period since 1989 has produced some significant changes both in terms of economic restructuring and transition process to the new social, cultural and politics models. The major problems which are facing up to are reflected by all sectors of activity whose effects are still felt, but they can be removed, attenuated and corrected through the application of some proper local development programs using EU funds or financial capital on current conditions of the post-accession of Romania to the European structures.

⁷ For more details about the main occupations of the local population from Măguri, see also Jucu, 2004, Crețan, Jucu, 2005, Crețan, 2007

The investments in agriculture and in some primary services should ensure the economic recovery and could promote an optimal spatial organization trends in line with the sustainable development. Other ways regarding the regeneration of the former local rural economy can be focused on the exploiting all the local resources, starting with the materials ones and finalizing with the non-material ones (local culture, traditions, customs, popular and folk art etc (for instance the capitalization of the local cultural touristic potential could be an alternative for local rural development of these villages).⁸ These measures are able to maintain the mutual destiny of the local rural development with the town, but more of that to generate the first real conditions for local identity reconstruction. Nowadays, the functional profile of these belonging urban localities as well as the contemporary social and economic status of them are the major conditions which ensure and maintain the relations of the former rural space with the town. The two belonging settlements depend on the functionality of Lugoj in terms of work, ordering supplies and of a complex range of services as commerce, primary or specialized education, social assistance, juridical services, health, entertainment etc.

5. CURENT PROBLEMS OF TAPIA AND MĂGURI COMMUNITIES BETWEEN INHERITED TRADITION AND POST-SOCIALIST REALITY

As well as the urban space of the municipality of Lugoj registered many difficulties after 1990 in order to adapt its structures and functionality to the new economic and politic requirements, the rural space administrated by the town supports the same perspectives. Many social and economic problems of the former rural communities are inherited ones from the previous political system. Some of them have widened after 1990 and together with them here appeared new ones as an outcome of the political and economical transition to the market economy specific for advanced societies.⁹

A complete analysis of the current problems of the former local rural communities managed by the municipality of Lugoj reveals numerous and complex particular aspects. Most of them are generated by the evolution of the local economy as well as by the way of life influenced by the difficulties of transition. Even if the contemporary trends of globalization have been in favour of the town, all these marked in a particular way the discussed localities. On the other hand, the main local problems are caused by the specific ethnical structure from Măguri, dominated by the Roma population. This reality was the topic for many studies made after 1990. In addition to that, we can state some aspects focused on the poverty of the inhabitants, on the social problems and economic integration, the low income, the absence of the jobs and the presence of the difficulties of the local inhabitants integration on the labour market of the town, the international migration for work which affects first the families but on the other hand being a source for a better gain which punctually contribute to the increase of the standard of living etc. So, we can set into discuss the widening gap between the former rural residents which can be obvious on the

⁸ the reevaluation of the cultural tourism for local development represents a suitable action which realistically contributes to the local development (for details see Smith, 2003, Cocean, 2006 etc).

⁹ For a global vision on the local problems of the rural communities see Jucu, (2004, 2010), Crețan, Jucu, (2005), Crețan, (2007).

Maguri and Tapia landscapes managed today by the municipality of Lugoj. Regarding the Roma community, the local administration of the town provides a real support for the development of this former rural demographic segment.

For instance in Măguri there have been developed and there are still running many projects aiming for a revival of this community (in the field of social and economic context) but in some cases the feed-back is quite far from the desired objectives. However, for further interventions, the improvement of a proper management clearly focused on the former rural space administrated today by the town can assure in the future a sustainable development. The former rural space must be separate manage with distinct aims of development and not to be seen as a space situated in the shadow of the urban settlement of Lugoj or as a less important part of the municipality. Such a vision can solve in time some problems which the studied communities face out. However, the improvement and the development of the local substructure and the local primary services must be the first step which certainly would attract the development. In addition to this, a better promotion of the former rural space at the local and the regional level can be an opportunity for a suitable evolution not for the town itself but also for its rural administrated areas. In this way it is promoted, as a global development tool, both the cultural values of the town of Lugoj and the social and economic identity of the former rural communities attached.

6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The particular sort of the territorial management according to which the urban administration manage together with the urban space some former rural localities situated on the very proximity of it is an inherited reality from the previous political systems. The improvement of this type of governance on the local communities can reflect a contradictory double aspect: firstly, the former rural space administrated can be easily integrated on the local development and, secondly, the villages can be differently managed in connection with the urban space, demarche which can favour the urban and marginalize the rural. For Romania, in the contemporary trends of decentralisation, such ways of administration can create many obstacles, contradictions and difficulties. These ones are reflected by many villages from Romania which have the same situation as the former rural settlements of Tapia and Măguri. Even if the urban restructuring of the municipality of Lugoj illustrates a favourable general dynamic (Jucu, 2010), its communities reflecting sluggishness from the social and the economic perspective.

The historical approach showed us that demographical capital as well as the real estate one comported a continuous evolution during the last century. The opening of the post-socialist period in Romania after 1990 illustrate a negative trend both on the former rural population increase as well as on the housing context. After the fall of the communist regime the villages managed by Lugoj faced out with many problems which mark the living standard of the population and the social and the economic local environment. In addition to this, we can observe, in some cases, the impairment of the way of life and also the defacement of the former rural landscapes. In such conditions the improvement of a proper and suitable management on the old rural communities must be a prerequisite for further development even if we discuss in terms of short, medium and long term development. The old rural localities can be seen as a spatial resource for the local and the community development. These spatial entities show the possibility to develop as integrated parts of the

town if the local administration takes into account the question of the former villages to become definite districts of the town, as an outcome of further extension of the inside urban space of Lugoj. From this perspective, the future intervention of the municipality can focus its attention on the local development, global and undifferentiated. The old villages have, this way, the possibility to evolve as integrated parts of the town. On the other hand, but from the same perspective, these spatial units can be favored on the development processes in terms of balancing the territorial development of the town, eliminating the spatial, structural and functional discrepancies as well as the intra-urban disparities and the functional and physiognomic contrasts and ruptures.

Another possibility for regeneration of the former rural space managed by the town is represented by the development of the villages itself as separate structures situated on the proximity of the urban. From this point of view, the strategies can be based on the bidirectional relations between the two types of the settlements. The goal of this approach is assumed by the promotion and the preserve actions of the local cultural capital as well as the particular spirituality of these villages. Not eventually, the reevaluation and the capitalization of the Romas culture - formed and preserved during the layers of time in a rural settlement particular in Banat (Măguri) - can constitute a real possibility in terms of the practices of the cultural tourism.

But which are the potential features that can be exploited in terms of accomplishing the aim of the regeneration of the former rural space managed today by the municipality of Lugoj? First, the agricultural potential can be a legitimate way for the local and old rural development through the working of the natural and human potential passing from the subsistence practices to the ones which can promote the market agriculture by supplying the urban market with different products and goods; second, the investment in industry can represent an alternative for the rural development through the appearance of new industrial parks and manufacturing activities, which can absorb the available labour resources (such a perspective can be proper for Tapia, mostly we are taking into account the new development of the industrial area from the Road to Tapia, as an outcome of the ring road completed in 2010; this area reflects many development possibilities which can finalize with the bonding of the urban space with the former village of Tapia); third, the investment on the tertiary sector represents a development opportunity even more because the services are less represented on the former rural localities; fourth, the promotion of the cultural tourism in terms of capitalization the local cultural values.

These general references made from a geographical perspective, are only some few generic directions for further interventions, in connection with the sustainable development of the human settlements. Of course, the undertaking and the running of future particular studies on the former or old rural space managed by the town of Lugoj can reveal other new available and particular opportunities which can successfully compete to the regeneration of the rural settlements administered by the local municipality.

In terms of cultural perception of the analyzed space of both settlements as well as the particular landscapes of them, the further scientific approaches may open new particular researches. These last ones, filtered by qualitative methods are able to offer new helpful information for the future local development in order to increase the quality of life as well as to reduce and eliminate the main problems with the local residents from here face out.

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