

Czech minority in Banat – Romania. A social geography survey

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Abstract

This paper describes the Czech minority living in SW part of Romania, namely in the Banat region. The community is concentrated in six villages, where they still keep their language and national habitudes since 1820, when the first families came.

They live very simply life based on agriculture, which is not perspective though. Therefore their population is still decreasing, especially amongst young generation. Potential chances for improving this situation might represent the “agro-tourism”, or at least financial funds, used e.g. for building infrastructure or improving healthcare.

Second part of work examines the minority policy in Romania, its development and degree of equation between minority and majority group. Also, the conclusions underline the necessity of improving the economic life of Czech communities, bringing these communities closer to the urban life and modern society.

Key word: Czechs, minority, Romania, Banat, ethnic group

Introduction

Although Czech minority in Romania is not predominant by far (represented only by 0.018% of Romanian population), is considered for one of the most homogenous and numerous ones throughout European countries. The most important Czech community is traditionally, for almost two centuries, situated in the Banat region, a south-west part of Romania.

Nowadays, the vast majority of them is concentrated in six villages of Banat, with estimated population of 1,800 (according to the census from 2002), in reality maybe even lower. There they still keep their native language and traditions, although they are naturally confronted not only with the original Romanian culture closely surrounding them, but also by economical and commercial pressure of the globalization.

Framework

Due to changes raised in the last 20 years in Romania's social and economic fields, the study of ethnic minorities has become an integrated part in the study of human groups, as well as a mandatory necessity for the scientific world and the authorities in this field. Concerning this, a group of researchers from the University of Bucharest and the University “Dunarea de jos” in Galati, all of them members of the research Center for Regional Development and European Integration, along with the young Czech researcher Adela Barakova, have initiated a research program meant to create an extensive presentation of the Czech minority in Romania, in order to acquire a better understanding of it and to inform the field's authorities.

Two teams were made up, led by the center's director Dr.Silviu Costachie, the first of which went on location in Banat, gathering a series of informa-

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tion, through questionnaires and fieldwork, while the second gathered information found in libraries and at the National Statistics Institute. After the analysis and interpretation of the acquired data, a clearer image was achieved of the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the Romanian Czech community.

The study was completed by adding a brief but detailed presentation of Romania's legal status concerning ethnic minorities, in order to offer a better look on the conditions in which minorities exist in this country.

Thus, the results of this investigation have succeeded in assembling a multitude of interesting aspects for both the academic world and more.

Methodology

In elaborating this study, which uses information acquired from both, fieldwork as well as libraries and statistics, two main methods were used:

- the first, specific to demography, sociology, as well as human geography, refers to composing questionnaires, to which a particular group of selected people should respond, within a fixed set of solutions. In selecting these people, certain characteristics were taken into account, such as age and sex structures, education and employment, and last but not least, the internal build and structure of the Czech communities in Banat.
- a second method refers to an approach by comparison of the different information sources (often unofficial) and reporting these to the official sources of the Romanian State. Thus, the partiality of the answers collected from the members of an ethnic group, is significantly reduced and much closer to a scientific truth.

The first method was looking to test the way the members of the Romanian Czech minority see their own social, cultural, economic and even demographic relations within their own group, thus achieving an overall opinion of the minority itself.

Though this opinion is somewhat partial being influenced by the degree in which a community identifies itself as an individual structure, such an opinion is important in identifying a starting point, concerning an ethnic group's own perception of its characteristics.

As stated before, the second method used, dramatically decreased the partiality in the information collected from the Czech ethnic group and helped in drawing a clearer picture of this group by explaining the different points of view on these people's characteristics.

The following material resulted after applying the two methods, trying to capture as large as possible an image of the Czech ethnic group, and

its relation to the new social economic and political conditions of post-communist Romania.

Czech minority in Banat

Minority definition and main Romanians minorities

The term minority generally refers to every inferior social group, whose members possess less control, social and economical power than those, belonging to the majority group. This minority status can be related to ethnicity, race, religion or language and it doesn't have to be exclusively correlated to number of its members, but to the power in society. Ethnical minority which we are focused on defines a community identified with the same culture, similar food habits, clothing, music, literature and whose history reflects the collective experience of their members (Typovska, Kamin, 2001).

Since the time of the Habsburg and Ottoman territories, Romania and other countries of Central-East and Southeast Europe were mosaic of multiethnic with own language and religious differences. These ethnic minorities were regionally concentrated in borderline areas (Anagnostou, Triandafyllidou, 2007). Until 2002, Romania became a home to the following ethnics (table 1, figure 1):

Table 1. Ethnic groups in Romania (2002)

Nationality	Number	Proportion [%]
Romanians	19,399,597	89.48
Hungarians	1,431,807	6.60
Roma	535,140	2.46
Germans	61,098	0.28
Ukrainians	59,764	0.27
Russians/Lipovans	35,791	0.16
Turks	32,098	0.15
Serbs	22,561	0.10
Tatars	23,935	0.11
Slovaks	17,226	0.07
Bulgarians	8,025	0.03
Jews	5,785	0.02
Croatians	6,807	0.03
Czechs	3,941	0.01
TOTAL	21,680,974	100.00

Source: *Census of population and dwellings, Romania, 2002*

Czech people and Romanian language

The Czechs were interested about the Romanian country and its language since several centuries ago. As the Czech educator and philosopher John Amos Comenius mentions in his work *Didactica Magna*, Romanian language is thought to

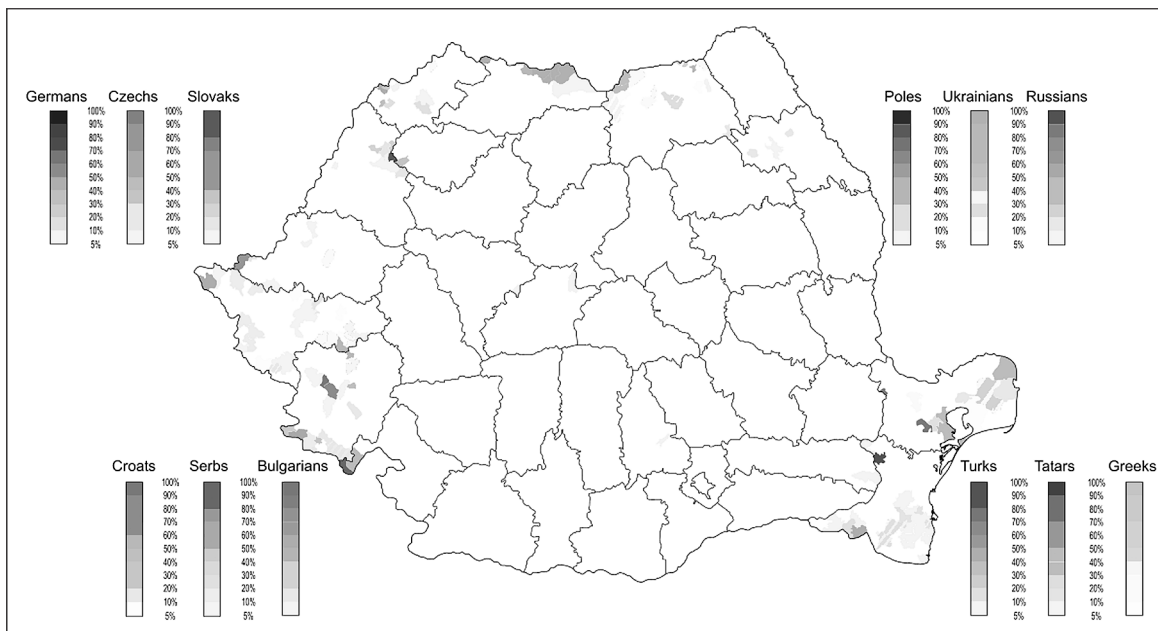


Figure 1. Ethnic minorities in Romania [along border areas]

Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b3/Romania_harta_etnica_2002.PNG

be the useful language to know. Further, Charles University in Prague was the fifth one (except of Romania), where students were allowed to study Romanian language. The first Romanian schoolbook was set out in 1963 as well as the first edition of the Czech-Romanian dictionary in the same year (Felix, 2009). Wallachia colonization is a process of a Western Carpathians (meant the Czech part) settlement in the Romanian shepherds during the 15th -17th century. The reasons were mainly political (escaping from Tatars and Turkish raids) and environmental (soil was overexploited).

This migration influenced both original Czech (or rather Moravian) inhabitants and new coming ones. These brought some new words penetrating to the Czech vocabulary, but on the other hand they lost a piece of their own identity, due to the confronting Ukrainian, Slovak and Polish ethnics during this period (Kysucan, 2009).

The Banat landform and the history of Czech settlements

The Banat region is geographical and historical region in the area of Romania, Serbia and Hungary, situated in the Pannonian plain and bordered by the Rivers Danube in the South, Tisza in the West, Mures in the North and by the Carpathian Mountains in the East (Nilson, 2006). The highland from 400 to 900 meters above sea level dominates here in the contrast with a low-lying Danube River. Geological subsoil is made of the limestone and creates its specific karstic shapes (KLVAC, 2009). These above mentioned characteristic as well as the shallow layer of topsoil con-

tributes to not very favorable way of cultivating and using land.

According to the fact that 78% of rural settlements is situated up to 400 meters above sea level which is the most suitable for agriculture, these higher altitudes are rather used for fruit-growing or livestock rearing. Mountainous parts above 800 meters (only 2% of the Romanian surface) usually provide area for natural pastures, while hayfields support animal breeding (Velcea, 1997).

Both Banat and Bohemia fell within one empire of the Austrian monarchy in the period of the first migration wave. Poor economical and social standard (dissatisfaction with the feudal regime, war with the Turkey and the Napoleonic wars, weak harvest following the starving, a state bankruptcy...) caused that the Bohemians started to search a new home-place to live. Banat finally seemed to become a proper locality, thanks to the timber businessman Magyarly who invoked first migratory wave in 1820-1824 (Klvac, 2009). Magyarly offered to people a job in the beech woods of Banat. Thus, 150-200 of families from the western part of Bohemia (regions of Plzen, Domazlice, Klatovy, Kladno, Caslav) decided to move, in expectations of improving their living conditions and finding a stable job. Nevertheless, the contract has expired in 1826, when Magyar broke off a food-supply and escaped even with the working tools. Cheated families had no other choice but to apply for the admission to the border alliance. However, in this period, first Czech villages Sv. Alzbeta (in 1823) and lately Sv. Helena (probably between 1824 and 1825) were settled (Dokoupil, 2003).

Second migratory wave (1826-1830) was organized by the Austrian government with the aim of increasing population density in this not quite popular border region. Newly coming inhabitants were allowed to use following benefits: payment their travel, taxes and military service immunity, providing finances until the first harvest, and further providing a land for cultivating, grazing and building a house. Thanks to this migration, the villages Bigr, Eibenthal, Rovensko, Gernik, Sumice and Frauviron were established.

These new inhabitants included mainly young single people or young families (of an average age 21 years), while the older men moved only rarely. They generally worked as craftsmen or peasants.

But people were suffering there. They stayed in the middle of the savage nature separated from the civilization, and the harvest wasn't sufficient for all. Firstly, they had to cut down dense beech forest in order to create a land for cultivating or building their houses. Anyway, during these migratory waves, at about 4,000 of citizens were moved here.

Another migration waves were initiated by the Austro-Hungarian government, making an effort to move people here with a view to cutting down the local forest in order to create rampart against potential Turkish expansion. Thus in 1862, not only by the Czechs, but also by the Romanian, German, Hungarian and Serbian people, the Clopodia village was settled. Then between years 1863 and 1865 the Skajus village, and in 1863 the last one called Velky Pereg (though, that one already doesn't lie in the Banat region).

Later during second half of the 19th century, analogous migration movement took its part even in other towns like Orsova, Moldova Noua, Arad or Timisoara, but in a smaller scale. To summarize, until nowadays six original Czech villages remained and two other had already disappeared (Dokoupil, 2003) (table 2).

The proportion of Czech inhabitants keeps a high quantity of 90-99%, thus generates very com-

pact company, relatively independent on others. This isolation has its tradition in the past. They have been always distinguished from the other ethnics: because of their higher living standard or due to non-orthodox religion. Whilst majority of the Romanian nation is Orthodox (86.7%), Czech minority declares to Catholicism (only 4.7% of believers in whole country) (National Institute of Statistics, 2002). Religious difference is also causing the fact that they contract marriages only amongst themselves (Klvac, 2009).

Numerical Development of the Czech population in Romania

Even though first years of adaptation in the foreign country were hard, Czech minority persisted and before First World War reached its peak abundance. But since this time, the population is regularly decreasing within every decade.

The number of 43,141 inhabitants comes from 1930, but it is relative not to the ethnicity, but the native languages. Moreover, that data is related to the Czechoslovak minority (whereas Slovak minority is generally more numerous), so the real number of the Czechs is supposed to be much smaller.

After the World War Two, the quantity was finely decreased thanks to the repatriation process, when between years 1947-1949 one third of the Czech population (almost 5,000 individuals) moved back to their native land and settled especially in the borders region. In year 1948, 35,143 Czech and Slovak speaking people (separated data for both nations aren't available again) lived in the Romania, whereas eight years later, only 6,196 persons with the Czech maternal language remained.

The number of the Czech ethnicity was slightly decreasing during next decades, and finally reached the third remigration wave. That started after 1989 revolution and still continues until present. Whereas in 1992, there were 5,797 members of the Czech nationality, in 2002 it declined to mere 3,941 (table 3).

Six Czech original villages are mostly represented in the two following Romanian counties: Caras-Severin (five villages are placed there) and Mehedinti (the Eibenthal village). In these administrative units, Czech nationality represents absolute population majority for at least last sixty years. As mentioned above, representation directly in the Czech villages is almost hundred-per cent (National Institute of Statistics, 1930, 1948, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002).

Schools of the Czech minority in Banat

Czech people cared for education (which was along with a religion their main priority), hence the first schools here were already built in the 1840s.

Table 2. List of the czech villages in Banat

Czech name	Romanian name	Present P/ Absent A	Number of inhabitants
Gernik	Garnic	P	525 [2002]
Svata Helena	Sfanta Elena	P	400 [2002]
Eibental, Jevental	Eibenthal	P	302 [2001]
Bigr	Bigar	P	254 [2002]
Sumice	Sumita	P	210 [1991]
Rovensko	Ravenska	P	120 [2002]
Svata Alzbeta	Sfanta Elisabeta	A	0
Frauviron	Frauenwiese	A	0

Source: http://www.banat.cz/ceske_vesnice.htm

Table 3. The evolution of the members' number of Czech minority (1930-2002)

Year	The Czechs in Romania		The Czechs in Banat	
	Number	%	Number	%
1930	43,141	0.23	10,582	25.00
1948	35,143	0.19	-	-
1956	11,821	0.07	8,887	75.00
1966	9,978	0.05	3,858	59.00
1977	5,507	0.03	3,530	64.00
1992	5,797	0.03	3,658	63.00
2002	3,941	0.01	2,971	75.00

Source: Census of population and dwellings, Romania, 1930, 1948, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002

Esibenthal was the first village, where a regular school attendance, already in 1848, was set up. Soon after, the other villages (Rovensko 1850, Sv. Helena 1851, Gernik 1851, Bigr 1852 and Sumice 1857) followed. But in the beginning teachers weren't professionals and the first really qualified educators didn't come until 1854 (Nilson, 2006).

Initially, the schools were governed by the municipality, so there was no problem of the Czech speaking educator to teach here. But due to the strong pressure of hungarization in the beginning of the 20th century, they became to be governed by state and taught by Hungarian teachers. Finally in 1910, the Hungarians took its privileged position and the Czech was allowed to be used only like an additive language. The situation was little improved after the First World War thanks to the Romanian offices, who permitted to be taught in the Czech as well as to return the sovereignty back to the municipality. However, more serious problem now became lack of Czech teachers.

Moreover, another trouble appeared, namely a ban of teaching foreigners in the public Romanian schools. In consequence of this bureaucratic problem, there was only one Czech teacher (in Sv. Helena), falling on all six villages. Thus it was necessary to nationalize the schools again (Moravcova, 2006).

In 1929, Romania made an exception and allowed to the teachers from Czechoslovakia to come and give lessons here. Still, it wasn't sufficient at all and they only might few hours a week and teach Czech language, singing-lesson and homeland study here. After the Second World War, the main teaching lesson was the Romanian, while completely in the Czech was taught only the first class. In the higher classes it was possible but with some limitations. Although the Romanian Ministry of Education permitted to use Czech textbooks, some school inspectors simply forbade them (Moravcova, 2006).

Nowadays, Czech language is obligatory in first four classes, while the Romanian has only additive role. Conversely, from 5th to 8th class, the Czech is

becoming facultative subject (3 hours a week) and the Romanian one dominates. The only exception of an exclusive facultative education since first class is in Eibenthal (Klvac, 2009).

Czech culture and habits in Banat

The Czech minority was making an effort to keep their traditions (which they actually achieved), thanks to it has been never fully assimilated. In almost every village (except of Gernik), there is a Czech library. Besides, various reading associations or even music bands were founding. Local people had a possibility to take some Czech journals (Masarykuv lid, Omladina, Hlas domova...), which were quiet popular amongst them (Moravcova, 2006).

Up to now, several heathen traditions like "burning witches", "carnivals parade", "lead casting" at Christmas, caroling at Easter etc. are still preserved. In all the villages weddings are celebrated thoroughly. There is an unwritten law, that only persons belonging to one nationality are able to be married (Krajane, 2008).

Traditional religion of the Czechs is Christianity. In Banat, the majority of people belonged to the Roman-Catholic; however there was also a small part of the Evangelicals (in Sv. Helena). But this spiritual aspect wasn't governed well and sometimes happened that a function of priest had to be practiced by an unqualified person (usually by teacher).

Anyway, the culture level of the Czech minority was high and they even became a model to the surrounding majority: how to cultivate more reasonably, how to govern their villages, how to care about the schools etc. (Moravcova, 2006).

Cuisine

Traditional food is considered for a typical Czech one, even though adapted on agricultural conditions of the Balkan climate. It contains meals made from flour, potatoes, milk and meat. From vegetables there is lot of a corn, tomatoes, beans or aubergin. Yet, during festivals are prepared

meals already traditional for Romania: “sarmale” and “mămăliga”.

Women go to the markets called *Piaca* in order to sell milk, cottage, cheese etc. These products are usually in a good-quality and that’s why they became so popular. The same quality level also enjoys homemade bread, though today it’s rather more common to buy it in a shop (Klvac, 2009).

Language

Czech language is still well preserved and daily used, thus generally there is no problem in the communication between the Czechs in Banat and those living in Czech Republic. The spoken language comes from the Middle-Bohemian dialect, which is very close to the formal language. And although all the Czech had no origins in this part, this dialect was generally popular so it became common soon (Klvac, 2009).

Contemporary spoken Czech language contains archaic expressions (especially in the older generation) and words originating from the German or from the Romania of course. On the other hand, it misses technical or scientific terms. New vocabulary contributions have often origin in the talk of the youngest generation, which takes over new words from the Romanian language (Svoboda, 1999). On the other hand, some resources suggest that language is updating regularly thanks to the digitalization: inhabitants have enough opportunities (at least in every pub it is very popular) to watch Czech channels on television, which keep them in contact with modern and actual language.

However, old words are gradually modified (distorted) and new ones are added, which might practically cause some misunderstanding, or even embarrassing situations. For example when known words are used in a different context. This mainly includes emotive, pejorative or other very informal sort of words (Krajane, 2008).

Agriculture

The villages of Banat are divided by their economical orientation: while Gernik, Sv. Helena, Bigr and Sumice are focused on a heavy industry (coal and ore mining), Rovensko is typical agricultural. The last one Eibenthal used to be a blacksmith resort (Krajane, 2008).

The land in Banat is very hard-won, fragmented due to the torn up ground and the fields can be distanced several hours by walk from the houses. The plough layer is shallow. Although the locality provides sufficient space for cultivating the soil, that is lack of a manpower which is missing. Farming of the poor residents does worth only for its own consuming and can’t be consider as a potential way of a business. On the contrary, Roma-

nians from Wallachia are those who start to profit by renting a soil.

Corns, wheat, beans, cucumbers or cabbage are traditionally cultivated. There can be also find apple-trees, pear-trees, plum-trees (used for the producing jam or typical plum brandy “*cujka*”). Further feeds for animals like trifolium or snail-clover plant here.

Pigs and poultry are usually bred here. Animal welfare is generally good, in comparison with intensive commercial way of breeding. For example the feeding doesn’t contain any artificial additives. But even here the animals suffer: for example from absence of space, fresh air, or because of bad ventilation. Though the sanitary conditions are not perfect and could hardly meet strict standards of ecological breeding, animals are more valued here and it is cared more about them.

Water mills called “*Vodenice*” represent kind of an ecological source of energy, traditionally used for making flour (Klvac, 2009).

Although it is definitely wrong to consider this sort of living for romantic or idyllic one, that is very illustrative in a way of consuming sources. Nobody wasting anything and production equals consumption.

Industry

In the first decade of the colonization when the settlers entered local forests, all the attention was naturally focused on mining and working a timber. Then in the seventies, works in the first collieries started thanks to the local black coal and anthracite resources. And this activity also caused, that first working colonies were built here. The biggest one, still preserved until present, is called *Ujbanyje*.

Ujbanyje is a village of nearly 2,000 inhabitants. Yet in the nineties of the 19th century, the colliery was still in operation (four work shifts per six hours) and deposits of anthracite were mining here. However, modernization and replacing manpower by robots caused that they are out of other nowadays (Svoboda, 1999).

Not only this colliery, but also anthracite and copper ones were closed in the last two decades. This is one aspect of the globalization process, when due to the mechanization and automation, manpower of workers is losing its importance in the society. This social and economical pressure indirectly forces people to leave their houses and find a job in some more perspective place. Thus they move either to another town in Romania, or they change the country: coming to Czech Republic.

But their idea about a life in Czechia is somewhat distorted and they imagine living there easier that it really is. Apart from all general diffi-

culties concerning migration foreigners "abroad", firstly, they aren't qualified sufficiently. Thus supposed to keeping on the lowest social level, which is not the way from the poverty they wanted to escape from. Further, there is another, a nationality barrier. In Romania they are considered to be Czechs and on the contrary Czech people considered them to be the Romanians (Krajane, 2008). This is probably a general problem of minorities whose members cannot be identified or classified by majorities. They are fully respected only within their community and when they themselves are not self-sustaining, they are dependent on the majority's help.

Contemporary conditions

All the Czech villages are isolated, so the connection between them and other municipalities is rather complicated. The shortest distance (of 20 km) is between Sumica and the Iablanita town. In the contrary, the most isolated village seemed to be Bigr, 80 km far from the town Orsova. Car traffic wasn't common here until a half 1980s and the first electricity was introduced as lately as fifty years ago. Popular way of transport represented so called "Duba", which carried the passengers working in the mines (Svoboda, 1999).

Concerning water and its supply, villagers still have some problems. For example the inhabitants of Sv. Helena and Rovensko must take water from a well because the source from the canalization was put out due to the problems with payments. Or they can use water from rains, which is rather source of supply water, not drinking one. Thus, the most safety way (especially for visitors) is to buy packed water in a bottle.

Health care isn't also well insured. For example doctor in Eibenthal ordains once a week, but in Gernik (which is the poorest), it is only once per two months. Therefore they better travel to the hospital in the nearest town, even though it takes several hours (Svoboda, 1999).

Perspectives for future

Finally in last year's, even the Czech Republic started to take care after its minority in Banat. In 1995, the Czech government gave 50 million CZK in order to build infrastructure, to introduce telephone network, to provide education by the Czech teachers and to improve healthcare (Krajane, 2008). Besides, there is a Czech humanitarian organization "Clovek v tiski", which takes care about the minority in Romania in a way of organizing some projects (Dokoupil, 2006).

Also Czech citizens themselves start to become still more interested in Banat, finding a way how to know and how to understand minority people on the one side, but also how to help them in the

same way. And that's why they came to an idea of agro tourism.

These projects are based on providing a private accommodation to tourists, who are arriving here for a holiday. They live in houses together with natives, eat with them, buy their homemade products etc. This financial source from the tourists is very important, because in 60 days of the summer season they are able to earn the same money like for the whole year working in a common job. Thus it's becoming very popular, though it also brings some difficulties. The families envy themselves and compete for the better furnishing of their houses amongst them (Krajane, 2008).

Serious problem is also coming from the globalization and its effects. Almost each family has a television and some of them spend hours a day by watching soap opera. This fascination even causes situations that working on fields are interrupted in order not to miss another piece of a popular serial. This often causes paradox situations that people have latrines instead of a water closet, otherwise they have satellites on their houses. Or they replacing windows by the plastic ones in the effort of ensure potential tourists about better comfort of their homes. The effect is opposite however and just contributes to lost authenticity of the villages.

Another trouble is concerned to bureaucracy with arranging trade license. This procedure lasts several months, is additionally connected with corruption and therefore people are rather dealing their accommodating business in unofficial way (Krajane, 2008).

Minority policy in Romania

Legislative rights of minorities generally

Considering unequal starting position of every minority group, their full and effective participation in political, economic and social life should be involved in legislation of all countries. If minorities are effectively represented in public affairs, discriminatory tendencies can be revealed and eliminated (EDRC, 2009). In opposite case when minorities are not discriminated both by persons and social institutions, the minority members can react in different ways:

- They escape from common life with the majority, but pretend passive acceptations of majorities behavior
- They resist without any violence, but within their community they create pride and self-respecting attitudes
- They reply aggressively, which can even cause asocial reaction (criminality, prostitution, alcoholism...) (Typovska, Kamin, 2001)

Efforts to equal minority-majority relations were therefore ensured (on the theoretical level) by international declaration with its regulation, that “every person belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life”, as well as the right to “participate effectively in decisions on the national and where appropriate, regional level concerning the minority to which they belong or the regions in which they live” (EDRC, 2009).

Realized rights of minorities in Romania

However in practice, this regulation is applied with different results and depends on the grade of de/centralization of every country. In the case of Romania, the country passed through both periods: Firstly in the inter-war period there was a program of economic modernization and unification, hardly supporting international interests of ethnic protection at the same time. Afterwards, communist ideology suppressing nationalism contributed to reinforcement of ethnic identity. Potential conflicts were prevented or neutralized, but real space for achieving the rights was missing. Although some minority rights exist, they weren't negotiated. The “rights” were not the result of common dialogue, but used only like a tool to secure more effective control (EDRC, 2009).

Nonetheless, after 1989 the ethnics shown their strength and were revealed relatively soon through economic and democratic transition. And keeping on respecting the rights of ethnic minorities were necessary in following years, when Romania was applying for membership in EU. An effective application of these laws is one of the demands of Council of Europe in order to diffuse every nationalist tension (Anagnostou, Triandafyllidou, 2007).

Thus, today's situation is much better and both major and minor sides are engaged to more and less equal opportunities. This case occurs mostly when a minority (in Romanian case the Hungarian minority) is so economically or numerically strong, that their suppression would also negatively impact the majority (EDRC, 2009).

Minority politics in Romania

It is specific for Romania that since their democratic era, every minority group can chose its own candidate and run him for the office. This system caused quite fragmented party system across ethnic spectrum and created perception, that their representatives are responsible for all requests, demanded by members of the minority party. In reality, majority is liberal to solving their issues, on the other hand it doesn't allow to minorities to be involved in more serious national issues (economic measures, social reforms etc.).

But this “minority-opened” strategy exclusively doesn't have to affect the minority parties favorably. Subsequent ethnic fragmentation can cut down the result of individual intentions. Further negative effect, caused by inter-ethnic rivalry, which finally plays to the benefit of mainstream parties. And no matter how strong is inter or intra rivalry, majority parties are profiting from this alliance because getting along well is easier than cooperation with other mainstreamed parties (EDRC, 2009).

Conclusion

Although Czech minority in Banat still manages to preserve its original traditions and language, the surrounding impacts of globalization and other economical changes (transition from agriculture to tertiary and quaternary sectors) threaten them. Especially young generation are quitting their homes (lack of jobs opportunities, backward infrastructure, uncertainty in business, insufficient healthcare...) with the visions of finding more perspective place to live.

It's obvious that these minority people need a help from the Czech Republic. Either thanks to institutions like government and foundations, or personally for example through agro tourist projects, though it means loss of their originality in the same way.

Neither is too realistic to believe in some radical changes for the better, regarding all aspects and trends of the global economy nowadays. But we can hope in a continuous resistance of the Czech minority, thanks which their ancestors came over all the hard years from the very beginning 190 years ago. Maybe just this is a sign of their immunity and ability to persist and preserve their culture to other generations.

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