

THE GERMAN SETTLEMENTS OF JOSEPH II
1784—1787

PhD Thesis

Istvan Kollega Tarsoly
2011

Pázmány Péter Catholic University
Doctor School of History
Leader: Prof. Dr. Katalin Botos
Leader of Theme: Dr. János Szulovszky

Budapest, 2011

THE ANTECEDENT OF THE RESEARCH, METHODS

The history of settlement of the Germans is as old as the settling itself in Hungary. The first work came from Franz Grisellini in 1780. Two periods have been particularly written about: the era of the reign of Charles III and the reign of Maria Theresa when settlements were sponsored by the state and/or large landowners.

The third grand volume of the Chambers procession under Joseph II reign – although significant as it is – only had small studies.

That is why I have chosen that time, the state sponsored and organized German settling's extensive and detailed study.

The literature of the German settlements

The manuscript of Lipót Kollonich, *Einrichtungswerk des Königreichs Hungarn* (1688–1690), edited in Stuttgart in 2010, by János Kalmar and J. János Varga, deals with Hungary's politics, administration and economics after the Turkish occupation. To publish this document is important in the aspect of this subject, because he was in the highest level of administration of the country dealing with the needs and the methods of the settling for the country's economic, social stimulation.

The history of the early German settlement after the Turkish occupation was published in *Bleyer Jakab's* study in 1928: *Das Deutschtum in Rumpfungarn*.

The synthesis of the later settlement between World War I and World War II was edited in 1935; it was *Konrad Schünemann's* monograph, over 400 pages, *Österreichs Bevölkerungspolitik unter Maria Theresia*. In it the author analyses not only the politics of settlements, but he also dealt with the history of Maria Theresa's German settling using archive data.

In 1936 two German historians Franz Wilhelm and Josef Kallbrunner published a source-book, *Quellen zur deutschen Siedlungsgeschichte in Südosteuropa* with high source value. This work's importance is in the list of 65 thousands settlers and the names of the settlers in the reign of Joseph II as well.

The regional researches resulted in a series by the Deutschen Ausland Institute between the two World Wars. One of these studies was the work of Gottlob Schuon in 1936: *Die Nordöstliche Schwabische Türkei*. This study follows the German settlers' careers from the beginning to the nineteen thirty's in the Tolna County, with numerous data from Dunakömlöd's and Nemetkér's population. This work is steeped in prejudice toward the Fatherland's economical and cultural superiority, typical for the decade of the 1930's.

One of the subjects of my work is Dunakömlöd and Nemetkér. Their history is written by Rogér Schilling, and covers the time from the beginning to the 1920's.

After World War II important works of the former German settlements were edited abroad, mostly in West Germany.

In the 1980's the identity of the Germans living in Hungary revived together with the literature of that relationship. First, in 1981 *Béla*

Bellér wrote a short essay: *A magyarországi németek rövid története*. After World War II, in the sixty's, extensive research from abroad was started, mostly by those Germans who were displaced after 1945. The deportees in their old-new homeland started to establish groups and societies in order to preserve their traditions. As a result of this many local histories were published related to Bácska and Bánát.

In Munich the Donauschwabisches Archiv published a series of almost 50 volumes. One of the most important researchers concerned with Germans living in Hungary was *Anton Tafferner*. His 5-volume-book, *Quellenbuch*, published between 1974 and 1995, is a collection of Hungarian archival documents. *Werner Hacker* investigated the local documents in the archives of the province in Germany. The 8 volumes were published between 1969 and 1987 and cover the settlers' origin and their data.

The subject of the international conference of history in Budapest in 1987 was the German settlers in Hungary. The theme of the conference was published in 2 volumes by Vendel Hambuch titled: *300 éves együttélés (The 300 years old coexistence)*.

In 1998 *Manherz Károly* edited a very informative book about the history, culture and folklore of the settlers: *A magyarországi németek*.

The above mentioned works don't cover the topic of the settlement in the Josephinian era, and only mention it in a few places. In 1990 Oskar Feltdänzer made an attempt to collect the documents of the settlers in Bácska and Bánát from the archives of Vienna and

Budapest. His 500-page-work contains 121 archival documents, which is respectable, but though it is similar to an earlier book, published between 1893 and 1907 by the South-Hungarian Historical and Archeological Museum Society, edited by Lajos Baróti. But it is only a resourceful collection of documents not a historical treatment.

The literature of the settlers of Bácska and Bánát

The history of the settlers of the Bácság has been closely followed since the 18th century. Before the Josephinian settling, the above mentioned two-volume-book of the Bácság with maps by Franz Griselini, had already been published (*Versuch einer politischen und natürlichen Geschichte des Temeswarer Banats in Briefen an Standenpersonen und Gelehrte*). This is the first monograph of the Bácság and was edited in Vienna 1780. After the first chapter, containing the history of the region, it gives details of the settlements after the era of the Turkish occupation of Hungary, how many settlers, where they were from, and where they were placed by the Vienna Chamber government.

One of the most important works of research was written by a former settler historian. Johan Eiman's book is a summary of a witness of the Újszivác settlement. He also examined the whole Bácska settling of the era of Joseph II. He, of course, hadn't seen the Chancellery's settler lists.

The 100th and 150th anniversary of the settlements resulted in several local commemorations. Those books provide important information about the subject.

After 1945 nothing was published in Hungary about the German settlements until the change of regime. In 1998 Géza Kovach published a book about the demography of the Bánság between 1716 and 1848. He does not mention the Josephinian settlements regarding the 27 villages and 12 thousand settlers in Bánság.

In 2002 László Marjanucz published a study about the arrangement and settlement of the Bánság also up to the time of Maria Theresa.

In 2009 the Centre of Regional Researches (Regionális Kutatások Központja, belonging to the Hungarian Academy of Science in Pécs) and the Virtual Institute for Research of Central-Europe (Virtuális Intézet Közép-Európa Kutatására) organized a conference titled *The Bánság, as a historical region from the end of the Turkish occupation until today. (A Bánság mint történelmi régió sorsa a török kiűzésétől napjainkig.)* The text of the lectures was published in the *Közép-Európai Közlemények. (Central European Communique).*

A number of studies have engaged with the local history and sociology but none so far has worked on the exhaustive history of the Josephinian settlers lists, except for the author of this thesis in 1993 for the KSH published Historical Demographic Papers. (*Történelmi Demográfiai Füzetek*).

Although in professional literature we can find some essays about the main topic of this thesis, i.e. Sóvár and the history of Sóvár Chamber Manor, there is no mention of the German settlements of the manor in the Josephinian period. That is why this dissertation attempts a complete analysis of the settlers' lists and the Sóvár chamber manor German settlements.

In 1932 a doctoral dissertation was published about Dunakömlőd and Németskér, which is an excellent recent social history work, but the lists from the Locotenential Council are not discussed completely.

THE METHOD

As a result of Joseph II's repopulation decree on 22 September 1781, between 1784 and 1787 nine of the ten newly developing Hungarian administrative districts got 7600 families mostly from the German provinces. More than three quarters of them moved to Bácska and Bánát. To understand why it was necessary to organize, with such huge effort, that 4 year operation, we have to examine the Hungarian situation in the 18th century from the end of the Turkish occupation to the reign of Joseph II. In this analysis I included the Habsburg policy of settlements, the social and ethnic processes, because all these were the reason why the area needed 34 thousand people to repopulate it after the 60 to 100 years following the end of the Turkish occupation.

The analyses of the important data of settlers' lists in the period of Joseph II are significantly easier to make using the special data base computer programs. They can get answers to any important or interesting questions. This study analyzes the data of settlers' lists.

The lists in the Archive of the Hungarian Royal Chancellery contain more than 5000 families' data. The list started in April 18 1784, and continued up to October 27. 1786, and holds 66,5% of all the 7600 settlers. That percentage will enable us to draw conclusions for the whole population.

The simplest questions are about the total number of all the settlers. Expert historians roughly estimate this number to be between 35 and 40 thousand.

I am examining the family structure of the settlers. The lists are perfect for that, especially S3v3r estate's documents, which specify in detail the age of the parents and children at the time of arrival. It also gives data for their origin, religion, education, profession and financial situation. The size of the new villages was the first criteria for their selection. I examine if there is any difference between S3v3r, the smallest, which contained 48 households, and the average-sized ones of N3metk3r and Dunak3ml3d.

The 230 immigrant families' lists of Dunak3ml3d and N3metk3r are not only complete, but also the two lists of the Chancellery and the Locotenential Council are almost identical.

The data of the passports of the 48 families that arrived in S3v3r is identical with the data of the archive in the Chancellery, and includes the moving in details. There were several different registers in the Archive of the Hungarian Chamber, showing the everyday life of the settlers from month to month. In the case of Dunak3ml3d and N3metk3r and especially S3v3r, I completed the research by the methods of microhistory.

Apart from the above mentioned, several other Chamber estates accepted settlers from Germany. There are detailed lists about them in the local accounts of the villages in 1787. The Chancellery lists do not contain the settlers' destinations. They can be discovered from other archival documents (Hungarian Chamber, Locotenential Council)

I describe the chosen communities in separate chapters. These chapters have two parts. First I introduce the region and the villages,

then I briefly describe the history of the Bácska and Bánság, especially the decades before the settling. The second part contains the social history of the settling, and the most important demographic characteristics of the settlers. I show a community, held together mostly by their ethnicity. Other reasons for cohesion – religion, place of origin, which was mainly the Upper Rheine region – were not important in this population. The reason might be the Act of Tolerance of Joseph II, and because of that numerous protestants joined to the settlers not only from the Upper Rheine area, but also from several other German territories.

The tables in some chapters of the dissertation were prepared with a computer program specially designed to work with the complete lists of the settlers.

RESULTS

7600 breadwinners led 34 thousands settlers to Hungary from Germany between 1784 and 1787. Processing their demographic data revealed new results. The detailed information of 5057 of the 7600 heads of the families was found in the National Archives of Hungary, in the Royal Hungarian Court Chancellery, therefore the statistical analysis is valid for the whole population. The family structure of the settlers, and the age, religion, origin, skills and financial situation of the heads of the families is as follows:

1. Most of the immigrants arrived with their families. 84.7% of the heads of the families were married, 9% were single and 5.7% were widowed. The average number in one family was 4.46.
2. The population mostly contained young or middle age people. 64.4% of the heads of the households were from the age group of 25–44. The largest number, 17.7% of the whole population, was between 30–34 years old. The number of settlers under 20 and over 65 years old is insignificant. The young ones were listed as unmarried members of the families and the older ones were counted as members of bigger families.
3. Most of the immigrants had 2–3 children. The children's statistics are examined in the examples of the complete families (4282 families) and those of widowed breadwinners (290 widowed). (Unmarried men or women did not come with children.) 81.9% of the complete families had children. The average number of children among the settlers was 2.56 children per family. The single parent

families brought 2.4 children, which makes 2.56 children in the total population (11,706 children in 4572 families). Despite the high fertility, there were quite high numbers of childless families too, the total ratio is 18.1%, half of them under 30 years of age.

4. In the tables there are two columns for the place of origin: one for the province or country, the other for the name of the village. Apart from the German provinces, settlers also came from France, the Netherlands Switzerland, Prussia and other provinces of the Habsburg Monarchy. The biggest number of settlers came from Lotharingia (505 families, 2575 people), Pfalz (587 families 2472 heads), Trier (435 families, 1979 persons), Saarbrücken (314 families, 1576 heads) and Alsace (280 families, 1225 heads) but there were no German provinces exempt from immigration. All in all, 61 provinces or countries are mentioned in the lists.

5. The directions of Lipót Kollonich for the early Hungarian repopulation, at the turn of the 17th–18th century, advised the hiring of Catholic German farmers for the Monarchy's southern part. That is why there is a difference between the early settlers' religion, and that of the newer settlers in the age of Joseph II. The earlier directives assisted catholic settlers only, but because of the decree of Joseph II, the 1784–1787 period of repopulation let protestant people apply for the lists. More than 30% of the settlers were protestant, 24.4% (1234 families) Lutheran 6.3% (319 families) Calvinist. The majority was still Roman Catholic, 68.4%, which were 3460 families.

6. Most of the settlers declared themselves to be farmers (74.41%).

Among them 18.24% had other skills. Since farmers got more and better help from the government, they preferred to work as farmers, although there were needs for skilled craftsmen.

7. 69.4% of the settlers had no money at all. Those people got support from the Hungarian Treasury. Those who arrived with some cash had to declare the amount. So we can see that the settlers – except for a few craftsmen – came mostly from poverty. The lists prove that from 1784 to October 27th 1786 the amount of money in the possession of the settlers was 170,793 forint. The average amount for one family was 33.68 forint, which was only enough to improve the conditions during the beginning of the settling.

8. The 7600 settler families spread all over the country, though the Viennese government sent most of them to the Bácska and Bánság (76.2%)

9. Because of the historical turmoil of the last 200 years in that area this population, at different times and for different reasons, almost totally disappeared, i.e. were displaced (Dunakömlőd, Németskér and Bácska), suffered many kinds of atrocities (Bácska, Bánság), were absorbed (Sóvár) or emigrated (Bácska, Bánság) from their original 1780's residence. In Sóvár, in the Slovak area, the German population disappeared at the turn of the 20th century. In Tolna County the population flourished until after World War II, although their language changed. After World War II they suffered mass displacement (74.3%). In Bács-Bodrog County and in the counties of Bánság their presence continued to diminish due to the disintegration of historical Hungary, then after World War II they also disappeared.

MY PUBLICATIONS ON THE SUBJECT

The full and detailed list of the 5057 breadwinners and their families, between 1784 and 1786, is in the Archive of the Royal Hungarian Court Chancellery. At the beginning of the 90's I wrote up the full list on computer. Dezső Dányi, General Director of the Library of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, gave directions for the assessment of the data. As a result of this work I published a study, 'German Settlers in the Age of Joseph II', in the Historical Demographic Studies in 1993.

In June 2007 I gave a lecture on the same subject at the meeting of the Hungarian Society of Heraldry and Genealogy. In the same year, in September, at an international scientific conference, in Keszthely, I also gave a lecture titled: 'Joseph II's Settlers'.

Between 1996 and 2008 the New Encyclopedia of Révai was published in 18 volumes, and in it I wrote or edited several articles about my present subject i.e. historical or geographical names: Bácska, Bánság, Délvidék, and others: Deportation, Germans, Délvidék atrocities.