



Space Disfunctionalities of the Network of Localities on the Tisa Course: The Frontier Effect

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The XX-th century was full of events for an old age man from Maramureş. In turn, he was an Austria-Hungarian citizen (until 1918), then Chekoslovakian citizen (between 1920-1940), a Hungarian citizen (1940-1944), a Russian (1944-1991) and Ukrainian (after 1991).

It is an achievement which a few European citizen have taken pride in. This is only one of the aspects that the "a frontier effect has taken" on the Tisa course.

This is a typical intramountainous depression, with a multiple origin: tectonic-erosive and volcanic dam. The depression has the orientation on the North-West and South-East line and it is drained by the river Tisa which flows on the East-West direction. In this way, the small axis of the depression become the axis of the gravitation convergence of the entire space of the depression.

The hydrographical network was the main factor of the people settlements, this being credit ed most on the bottom of the rivers. The encreasing of the population, the need of the territory determined their expansion, not only in the holm but most on the hills sight, here getting the aspect of a dispersed village or even wasted.

The feudal towns appeared near fortress (Hust, Visk, Sighet) through privileges accorded to them by the Hungarian crown to their "guest" (Teceu, Câmpulung la Tisa). From all these, some turned back to rural life (Visk, Câmpulung la Tisa), others continued and developed as trade towns, all together, in the corridor of Tisa.

Hust and Sighet became, by far, the most developed towns. Hust town enjoyed its position as a "gate through wich" the Tisa river flows out from the depression, this position concentrated the tides and the continuing defense of the fortress until the 18-th century (when it was destroyed by an explosion).

Sighet town enjoyed the position of a "market" of rivers confluence, being, in this way, a polarized center in the area. More over, Sighet got the rol of an administration center of salt exploitation from the neighbourhood (Slatina, Ocna Şugatag, Coştiui) the salt being considered much more important than it is today.

In the second half of the 19-th century it was achieved (and maintained) a constant development when the railway appeared (Satu Mare, Sighet, 1872) and prolonged until Vişeu Valley (1894) and Borşa (1913). Besides the succesful exporting of the salt (made before by raft) the railway allowed coming into being of the processing industry. Ther appedred processing wood sactories (chairs) building supplies, glass and industries. We can say that at the end of the 19-th century and at the beginning of the 20-th, Maramureş continued progressing and concentrated its economical life in the basin of the Tisa river. For all the achievements mentioned before, a great importance had the existence of the Jewish people in that area.

In 1728 there were only "seven Jewish" in the entire Maramureş depression (Filipaşcu Al., 1970) in the census from 1910 have already existed 62245 persons (Boar N., 2001) most of them living in the localities on the Tisa course, without forming the majority of the population there.

The presence of Jewish population in the economical life constituted an expressive indicator (level). Maramureş developed its economical and political life unitarly, but less succesefully was the evolution of the population and religious ecclesiastic evolution.

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Demographically speaking, colonizations, migrations or assimilations, at the beginning of 20-th century (statistic from 1910) the region reaches the following ethnical distribution of the population (Boar N., 2001).

- two expanded regions, ethnical homogeneous, one inhabited by Carpatho-Russian people, at the North of Tisa, another one, inhabited by Romanians, at the South of Tisa, separated by an ethnically mixed area represented by the course of Tisa;
- an area of the majority population in a departement that lies on the territory where the majority is the other ethnically group: the Apșița basin on the Ukrainian territory inhabited by Romanians, and the Ruscova basin (prolonged onto the lower course of the Vaser) inhabited by Romanians;
- small ethnic nucleuses in homogeneous ethnical spaces, as the Hungarian nucleuses in Coștiui, Ocna Șugatag, on the Romanian territory or at Hust and Visk on the Ukrainian land. Similarly, there are Ukrainian nucleuses in Apșa de Sus and Rona de Sus, situated in Romanian ethnical areas;
- ecclesiastically, the entire territory was dominated by Catholicism; besides it israielities appeared. The Hungarian and German population belonged to Lutherans or Catholics, the Romanians and Ukrainians were Greek-Catholics. The Romanians were affiliated to Gerla Bishopric (that of the North of Tisa), the Carpatho-Russian were affiliated to Mukaceva Bishopric.

In that context, the first World War's event and the Peace Conference from Paris created the political frame of separating (dividing) the region of Maramureș in two parts, although (the) both banks of Tisa river were occupied by the Romanian army, and it had been decided the union of the entire Maramureș with Sighet. The Great Powerful Countries had taken a different decision. Zakarpattia region is added to the new Czecho-Slovak state following the criteria of similarities of languages they have been spoken, and the border is settled on the Tisa river.

It remained so, inspite of the diplomatic activity of the Romanian representatives, who tried to keep, at least, the course of Tisa, to maintain the railway Sighet - Satu-Mare on the national territory, and not to separate it from the Mother-country, the compact area, occupied by the Romanians, in the Apșa basin.

The succes was due to the American deputation which sustained the border on Tisa and on the line of Oaș mountains, the first division of Maramures being established between 1920-1970.

The results of the distribution were decreased by the permissible system of going and coming by the democratic polinticy of the Czecho-Slovak through state, which also allowed Romanian schools and well-prepared teachers in Romania, the great number of possibilities of crossing the Tisa river on bridges (5 roads) or railway roads.

After the short period of remaking the integrity of Maramureș (1940-1944) inside the Hungarian government followed a failed attempt of lining up to the Russian state the entire Maramures land followed. In January-April 1945, having the Russian army on their territory, under the obscure local lawyer (Odoviciuc) it has been tried the Valley of Iza The Romanians from the Iza Valley had strongly retored and there were added the Western Powerfull Contries regimants which opposed to the Russian state and saved the Southern part of Maramureș from lining up to U.R.S.S.

They were separated from their children, brothers and sisters, properties or other things. There were devided parishes, the Christian remained out of their church e.g. (in Bocicoiu Mic). First of all the bridges were destroyed, or there were stopped the crossing of the people, the river flood contributed to the damaging of already neglected bridges. Significant are, even today, the cut off roads wich crossed the Tisa river, the only one remained actual, was that from Campulung la Tisa section, they had to use the Romanian railway.

There happened to be in two localities which had been together before and had compartments on the both banks of Tisa. In this way appeared Teceul Mare (Ucrainean) and Teceul Mic (Romanian), Bocicoiul Mare (Romanian) and Bocicoiul Mic (Ucrainean), Dilove (formed Trebusheni) on the Ukrainian territory and the Valley of Vaser on the Romanian territory.

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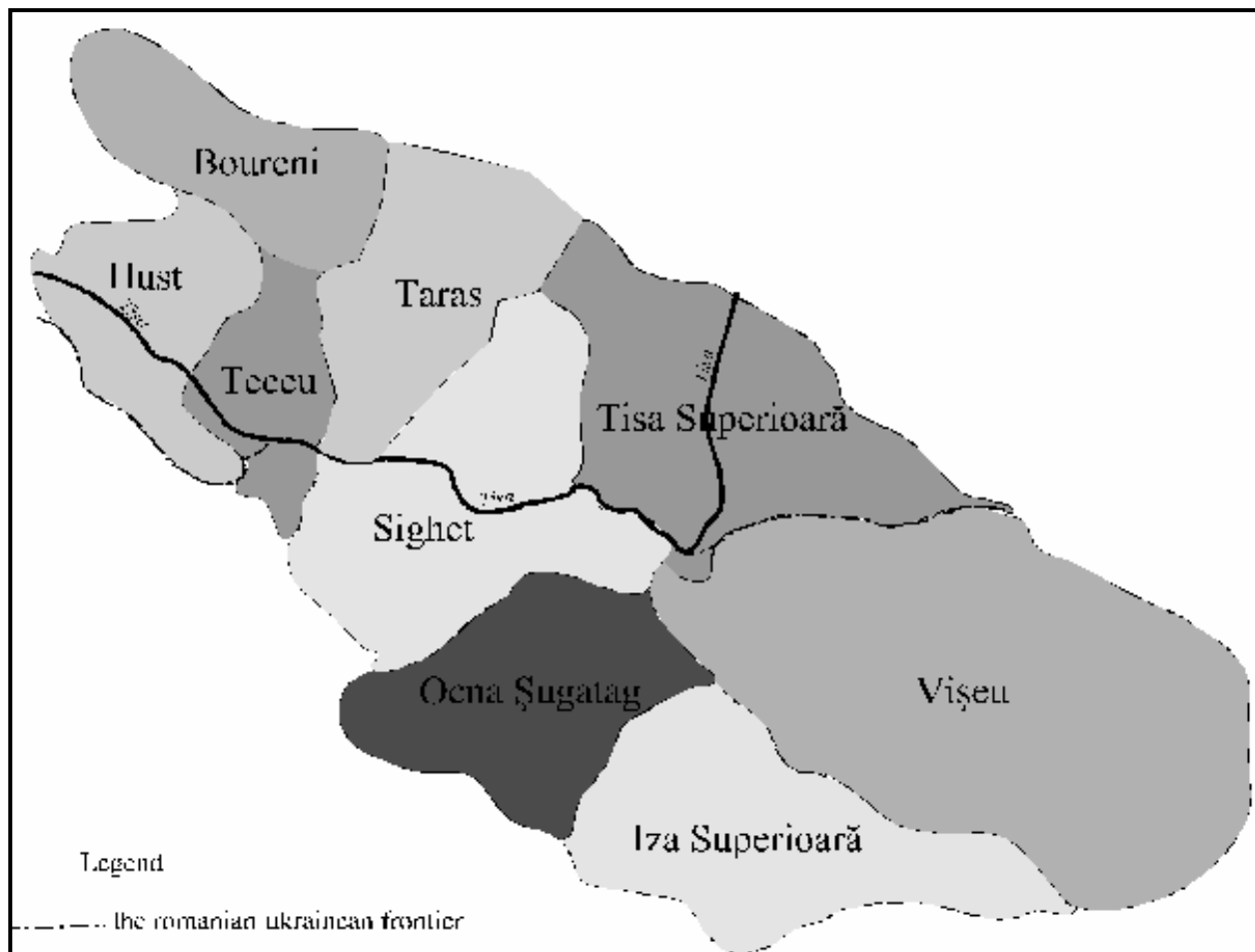


Figure 1. The Country of Maramureș. The administrative division on nets in the year 1900.

The outskirts of the town were cut off. The administrative and territorial organization of the land of Maramureș was organized in nets. The net Sighet stretched most on the Tisa river and in the Northern part of it has been inhabited by the Romanians until today, and the net Teceu which goes down on South line of Tisa covering the village Remeți with other some villages. The placing of the border on the Tisa river made the towns Teceu and Sighet remain with less influence in the area and to have difficulties in getting supplies.

It was separated from the mother-country, the dense ethnical areas of Romanians from the Ukrainian territory and Ukrainians from Romanian territory. The consequences of the division could be observed in the latest evolution of the languages, a few teaching staff, who are asked to teach the maternal language in schools. And the list may be continued.

The consequences of the so called "frontier effect" on the localities system from the Depression of Maramureș its division in two systems which put back together (but only the communication on natural way) the economical communication and that between people, was for a long time decreased.

In the Romanian section of Maramureș, during the socialist area, there appeared two new towns: Vișeu de Sus and Borșa. The first, Vișeu de Sus, as a industrial center on the river Vișeu, the second, Borșa as a mining town.

Simetrically, in the Ukrainian Maramureș, town the locality Rahiv, on the upper Tisa was declared. These had been former bigger rural localities (1000-2000 inhabitants) where some blocks of flats, perishes, and small factories have been built, but they are still named localities and urban population in statistics. In the basin of Tisa this are Veliki Bicikiv, Solotvina, Teresva.

None of these former towns or new ones succeeded in taking the former leading part of Sighet as an important center of the entire Maramureș.

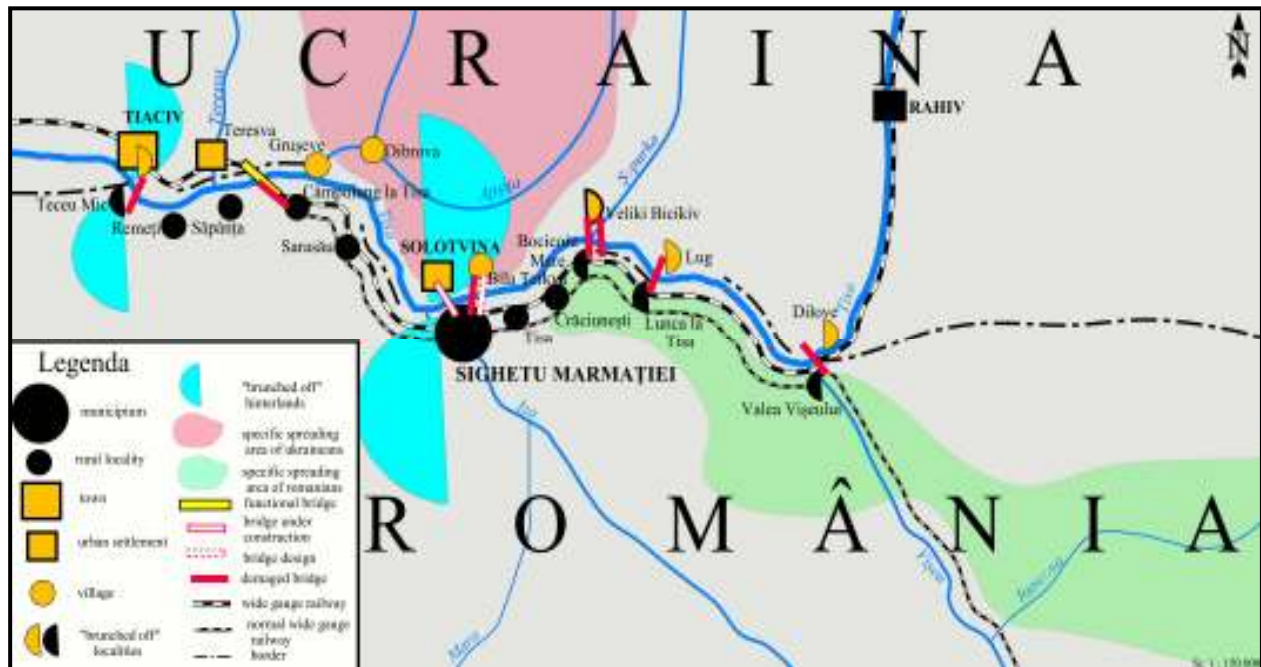


Figure 2. Space disfunctionalities of the network of localities on the Tisa course. The frontier effect.

After 1990 the town Sighet got gradually back its leading part encouraged by the facilities in crossing the border to the population from the border area. There is already a small staff's traffic which is being compensated by the lack of possibilities in the trade across the border for the local business men. There is a "Russian market" in the market of Sighet even the majority of those "Russians" are in fact Romanians from the Northern part of Tisa. There are Ukrainians who have already learned to speak the Romanian because they have been practicing the small trade on counters in the market from Sighet.

In this way, after the Comuniste period, when Sighet was seen only as an industrial center, today the town of Sighet regained its commercial importance, with a large priority some other times, and the function of cultural center of the entire Maramureș is getting stronger. This is due to the existence in the town of a University College which belongs to "Babes-Bolyai University" from Cluj – Napoca. We can say now, after 3 years, that this college has attended been by most Romanian students from the Romanian Maramureș, but it will be attended in 2001-2002 by Romanian students from the Northern part of Tisa, too.

A hopeful fact for all the localities on the course of Tisa is the Charpatic Euro-region The district of Maramureș has joined their structure since 1997, as a consequence, the cultural, economical and social relations have been intensified. The most spectaculos result is the gradually remaking of the overborder relations on the railway. So, between Sighet and Slatina it was rebuilt the ancient bridge, a bigger one, being already an approved project. This fact will allow the encreasing of the relations on the North-South direction, today they are working on the West-East line. We are convinced that a future administrative – territorial reorganization of Romanian, based on more effective principles the municipium Sighetu Marmăției will be able to become an actual "heart" of the historical Maramureș, a great influence that should outrun its border, remaking and increasing its authority.

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