

THE ADMINISTRATIVE – TERRITORIAL ORGANISATION AND THE AGE OF SETTLEMENTS IN THE AREA OF CODRU DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT. – **The Administrative – Territorial Organisation and the Age of Settlements in the Area of Codru District.** The geographical area of the District of Codru has been inhabited since ancient times, as archeological evidence has demonstrated, the oldest settlements dating back to the Neolithic, within an age range of 4500 and 2500 years. The area of the District of Codru was settled by free Dacians, as the Dacian coins found here give evidence. This microregion was not incorporated in the Roman province of Dacia. The arrival and departure of various peoples who ruled over this area have left their mark not only on locals' life and history, but also on the administrative – territorial organization of the District of Codru. Successively, this area was organized into rural tribal communities, into principalities and voivodships (the microregion was part of the Voievodship of Transylvania), shires (during Hungarian rule), counties and *plase* (several communes forming a single administrative unit, in 1950), ministerial directorates (under Iuliu Maniu's government in 1930s), into regions (made up of districts, towns and villages - called *communes*), finally, divided into counties, towns, communes and villages. All these changes the area of the District of Codru has undergone, together with all the various ruling of peoples coming and going across the ages have not altered the identity and authenticity of the inhabitants of the microregion called the District of Codru.

Keywords: *age of settlements, administrative-territorial organization, the District of Codru.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Time passes incessantly leaving behind a history of events, a history which allows us to imaginarily travel back in its course, a history which mirrors a people's past, with their joys, hardships, sufferings, victories, defeats or failures. The history of a nation is like an album of memories comprising collections of local history of all the settlements and places inhabited by that particular people.

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Browsing Romanian people's "history album", Vasile Iuga of Săliște stated: "Romanians' history is one of a steadfast people, unitarily formed within the area of ancient Dacia. Within the natural borders of the Danube-Carpathian-Black Sea area the Romanian nation was formed and has permanently lived on this territory; our ancestors, the Geto-Dacians, who made up an organic group of people belonging to the greater family of the Thracians, created, since the dawn of man, one of the great ancient civilisations, comparable to that of ancient Greeks, Persians or Romans" (Iuga, 2015, p. 91).

Romanian people's history has been marked by various ups and downs, the people living on this territory have been forced to fight in order to defend their motherland against those who intended to gain ownership of it.

The District of Codru, located on both sides of Codru Ridge and Piedmont, has had a distinct history among those of other microregions/regions of Romania, this area playing the role of a transit zone, of a border territory separating different political realities since Dacian-Roman times, as the "land" actually lay along the Roman limes.

2. METHODS AND DATA USED

Several methods were applied in our research: literature review, data analysis, statistical methods, mathematical methods for data interpretation, cartographic methods (used for creating customized maps to render research data in a cartographic format) and synthesis.

3. THE AGE OF THE DISTRICT OF CODRU SETTLEMENTS

It is common knowledge that since ancient times people preferred to settle in areas where nature provided food sources and shelter to protect from danger. Therefore the area alongside the Someș River Valley and Codrului Hillocks became a favourable region for people to settle and develop social communities since times immemorial and antiquity.

To demonstrate the age of human settlements being established in the area of the District of Codru we took into account the archeological discoveries and historical documents which testify to the anthropization of the lands included in the District of Codru. As V. Băința also stated: "primitive people inhabited the area several millenia ago..." (Băința, 2000, p. 303).

The archeological diggings carried out in the area have documented traces of material and spiritual life dating back to 2000 – 1500 BC. In the 19th century, at Stâna (1872) in the southern part of the area (near its borderline),

an archeological deposit of bronze artefacts was discovered; it included spears, bracelets, Celtic axes. In the early years of the 20th century, at Beltiug, in the western part of the District of Codru, a new archeological deposit was discovered: it contained such artefacts as hatchets, axes, a pin and a dagger – all of them made of bronze. Also, other artefacts were unearthed: the axe with a disc and a nail – used as a fighting weapon (found at Homorodul de Jos), the deposit of five axes (at Medişa). The ancient settlements found at Necopoi and Homorodul de Sus belong to the Suci de Sus culture.

In 1960, at Corund, a bowl-shaped pot (“terra sigillata”), from the 3rd century BC was discovered. In 1964 and 1978, at Ghirişa, in the western part of our investigated area two treasure troves of Imperial Rome denari were found. The one discovered in 1964 contained 158 coins dating back from the reign of Vespasian (69 – 71 p.Hr.) to that of Septimius Severus (194 p.Hr.). The second trove consists of over 1000 coins dating back to a period starting from 71-69 BC to 20 BC.

Archeological research carried out on the territory of Oarţa de Sus (commune) shows that the oldest settlement dates back to the Neolithic period. On the hill of Oul Făgetului (Beechwood Egg), a Neolithic settlement belonging to the Tisa cultures was discovered, and on Măgurii Hill a Neolithic village belonging to the Tisa Polgar culture was unearthed. Along the same borderline zone, dating back to the same historical age, other archeological discoveries were made in Unghiului Valley, in Bicz village (the necropolis of *Togul Nemţilor*). Dating back to the early Neolithic age, as well as to the early Aeneolithic period, the settlements found on the territory of the Commune of Homoroade (involving the Starcevo-Cris culture in Homorodul de Jos village). To the Neolithic age belongs the ancient settlement found at Supuru de Jos – Sentieului Hill, located on the high terrace of Crasnei River. A Neolithic settlement was also found on the territory of Oarţa de Jos, at the site of *Vâlceaia Rusului* (*The Russian's Clearing*).

To the Aeneolithic and the transition period to the Bronze Age belongs the settlement called Tiszapolgár, or, respectively, Coţofeni. Besides the Coţofeni type pottery, found in the approximately oval – shaped hut, earthenware pottery of Baden culture was also found there.

The archeological research done on Oul Făgetului hill has revealed three stages of settlement: the bottom layer suggests a lifestyle belonging to the Suci de Sus 2nd phase culture, the middle layer belongs to the Lăpuş 1st phase grouping, whereas the top layer indicates traits of the 2nd phase of Lăpuş culture. Some fragments of ceramics of Wietenberg type were also found.

At the site named Făget large amounts of earthenware objects or fragments of objects were found, dating back to the late Bronze Age, grouped under the Lăpuş type of culture. In this area a relatively large number of objects of black and red ceramics, fragments of tall belly-like shaped containers or pots, identical to those found in the first phase of the necropolis from Lăpuş (Kacsó, 2004, p. 54).

Archeological evidence tracing back to the Bronze Age, belonging to the Suciul de Sus, Lăpuș group type of culture was also identified at the sites of Mânzata, Citere, Costișa, on the southern and south-western slopes of Dealului Crucii (Cross Hill).

On the territory of Bicaz village archaeological excavations unearthed a tumuli necropolis of the late part of the Bronze Age, a cemetery located on a prolonged ridge whose tumuli were built in two stages. The first stage consisted in building a 1metre high mound, in the middle of which a hole was dug. Few fragments of pottery objects were found in this hole. In the second stage, the smaller mound was covered, and kerbed around with earth filling. The fragments of pottery objects found in the tumulus investigated presented a black channel-shaped decoration on the outside, and were of a red colour inside. This necropolis consists of 33 tumuli organized in a semicircular shaped plan and represent the burial places of local kings (or leaders), huge burial monuments in the shape of "local pyramids".

At the boundary point of Valea Unghiului, in the area of Bicaz commune two bronze archaeological deposits were also found. The first trove weighed 226,155 kg and consisted of pickaxes with tapering blade and peen, spear tips, daggers, sword blades, hatchets, bronze cakes, fragments of a halfmoon fretted pendant with rod with a longitudinal punched line, fragment of a sickle with a rest of casting, whole bronze cakes and fragmentary bronze cakes, pieces of unprocessed bronze ingots, fragmentary chisels. The second deposit weighed 142,481kg and consisted of whole and fragmentary pickaxes with tapering blade and peen, the blade of a Darjna type axe, fragmentary daggers, a sword blade, whole and fragmentary sickles, with a cross eye and longitudinal decorative lines, fragments of wing-flanged axe heads, spikes, diamond-shape cross section bracelets, Gutenbrunn type pin, fragment of a fibula, bent halfmoon pendants, wide folded belt plate, various pieces of molten bronze, aggregated in a slag, copper alloy casting waste, pieces of unprocessed copper, a fragment of narrow-width bronze strip, fragments of bronze cakes, etc. (Kacsó, 2004, p. 57). Analyzing the objects found in the two Bronze age deposits on the territory of Bicaz commune, specialists came to the conclusion that the pieces included in the first deposit (Bicaz I) are older than the ones belonging to the second deposit (Bicaz II). The older bronze objects had been made using a traditional technique in local foundry shops. The objects in Bicaz II seemed to come from foundry shops located more or less farther from the exaction place, apparently, imitations of the local foundry shop(s).

On Ghiile Botii Hill, in Oarța de Sus, a human settlement dating back to the Bronze Age was discovered, becoming one of the most important sites of the Bronze Age period testifying to the existence of some form of civilization in the Carpathian basin. In this area, a unique sanctuary belonging to the Wietenberg

culture was discovered. The site is located right on the top of the hill, which underwent artificial elevation too. The central ditch of this sanctuary and the holes dug around must have been used for animal and human sacrifices as a burial place, along with pottery, metal objects, dies for metal casting, objects made of bone, stone and baked clay. The research conducted in 2003 at Stremțului Hill site uncovered fragments of an above-ground hut (or house) of the Suci de Sus culture, a living place with two hearth fireplaces, one of which was rebuilt three times.

In 2005, at the site of Giorocuța, a bronze artefacts deposit was discovered, dating back to 1000-900 BC. The deposit consisted of two axe heads, two sickles, a bracelet and a chisel.

In the same borderline area, Oarța de Sus-Bicaz, excavations unearthed gold and silver objects, coins, golden bracelets, spiral bracelets, over 100 pottery objects, decorated with spiral- like or geometric motifs, using incision techniques. Many of these are kinds of objects which had never been found elsewhere in the same cultural area they belong to. They give evidence of the existence of a flourishing Dacian settlement in this researched area dating back to 2nd and 1st centuries BC. This Dacian settlement is located in Măgura village.

The presence of our ancestors the Dacian – Gets, later that of the Dacian – Romans on the hillsides and valleys of Codrului Ridge and Piedmont is certified by archaeological evidence recently found. A recent piece of evidence was produced by the school children living along the borderline of Oarța de Sus, in the hilly area of Sălaj Valley. They found a treasure of coins scattered in the fields of their farms, dating from the times of Roman Empire rule in Dacia (Băințan, 2000, p. 303). The treasure trove consisted of 303 silver denari, a huge fortune at that time. Roman coins were also found along the borderline of Băsești village, which attests the development of civilisation, economic and cultural relationships during that period of the local Romanian population living in the area on both sides of the administrative border. This was also due to the geographical closeness to the Roman limes of the District of Codru area.

The most spectacular aspect is represented by the occurrence of the name of “Bodava”, which refers to the largest part of the borderline area of today’s town of Ulmeni. It is located in the south – western part of the town (in Someș-Uileac village), where traces of an existing material civilisation of the Dacian Gets, as well as their interactions with the Roman Dacians in the central part of Transylvania.

The Romanian people’s continuity of existence on this territory is also attested by **historical documents**, which proved as false the theory according to which the Romanians living in Transylvania have not lived here for millennia. Among the written documents mentioning the continuous existence of the Romanian populace on this territory is the Chronicle by Anonymus (*Gesta Hungarorum*), a

notary of king Bela, which was written in the 12th century and disputed by many Hungarian historians. The Chronicle described how the Hungarians settled on the plain of Pannonia and also made a presentation of Transylvania.

In addition to the archaeological discoveries and written historical documents, the **ethnographic heritage** is of significant relevance to the effort of documenting the continuity of the Romanians in the District of Codru area. Despite the often harsh living conditions they have had to face, the inhabitants of Romanian ethnicity living throughout their country's territory have been creating a rich material and spiritual folk culture. The features indicating this continuous existence can be identified in the preservation of old trades or occupations (farming and sheep herding), the way folk costumes are made and worn and folk architecture in rural areas.

To support the idea of Romanian population's continuity in the District of Codru area the linguistic argument can also be mentioned. The existence of some Latin origin words which are not commonly used in other regions of the country in today's language and are preserved only in the District of Codru patois is an example in this respect. For instance, the verbs *to gain* or *earn*, used sometimes with a reflexive object, too, has preserved a 16th meaning: *to tend to something, or look after somebody* in the locals' language. (e.g. When I was a little girl I used *to gain* the cows"). Another Latin origin word is *vipt*, coming from *victus* (meaning "nourishment") has currently the meaning of food you take with you for a trip, or while travelling, not regular, homemade meal. The Dacian – Roman origin of the settlements in Codrului Country area is augmented by vocabulary items of used in the ancient times, still preserved in today's speech: *vatră, beci, codru, țarc, strungă, domn, ușă, casă* (meaning: *hearth fireplace, cellar, forest, pen, sheep's forcing pen, lord, door, house*).

Information on the **authenticated acts of foundation of the settlements (localities)** is usually presented in written formal documents. However, these documents are not always accurate in certifying the actual age of the settlements. The earlier documents only mention that these localities were the first by a particular name on a particular territory at a certain date when the authority representative or a legal body issued the document.

It should be noted that the Romanian villages in the District of Codru, as well as other localities founded throughout Transylvania were not authenticated as being settled at a particular date in the course of history, but were attested at a later date. They were mentioned only when a legal document issued by the Hungarian king or voivod involved their submission in bondage to the new Hungarian noblemen who were granted or donated the land where the locality was. Transylvania was completely conquered by the Hungarian kings in the 13th century. Therefore, these localities first appeared mentioned as existing by their name in a legal document since that period.

Table 1. Authenticated Acts of foundation of the settlements
in the area of the District of Codru

Locality	Authenticated Act of Foundation	Locality	Authenticated Act of Foundation
Ardusat	1231	Lipău	1409
Arduzel	1334	Măriuş	1424
Ariniş	1543	Mânău	1423
Asuajul de Jos	1391	Medişa	1273
Asuajul de Sus	1391	Motiş	1387
Babţa	1383	Necopoi	1828
Băiţa de sub Codru	1475	Oarţa de Jos	1391
Băseşti	1391	Oarţa de Sus	1391
Bârsăul de Jos	1470	Odeşti	1424
Bârsăul de Sus	1470	Ortiţa	1391
Beltiug	1216	Poiana Codrului	1648
Benesat	1475	Pomi	1407
Bicaz	1424	Racova	1393
Bicău	1394	Răteşti	1423
Biuşa	1388	Rodina	1954
Bogdand	1383	Roşiori	1409
Bolda	1648	Sălişte	1424
Borleşti	1585	Sălsig	1387
Buzeşti	1684	Sâi	1424
Chilia	1370	Sârbi	1424
Ciuta	1461	Socond	1424
Corni	1451	Soconzel	1424
Corund	1423	Solduba	1475
Crucişor	1231	Someş Uileac	1383
Cuţa	1424	Stâna	1648
Fărcaşa	1424	Stremţ	1410
Gârdani	1424	Supurul de Jos	1215
Gerăuşa	1424	Şandra	1387
Giorocuta	1423	Tămaia	1231
Giurtelecu Hododului	1378	Tămăşeşti	1424
Hodişa	1271	Tătăreşti	1411
Hodod	1334	Tireac	1954
Homorodu de Jos	1273	Tohat	1424
Homorodu de Mijloc	1394	Țicău	1543
Homorodu de Sus	1273	Ulciug	1387
Hurezu Mare	1424	Ulmeni	1405
Iegherişte	1272	Urmeniş	1391
		Viile Satu Mare	1909

Source of data: Data were retrieved from Suci, C. (1966)

Analysing the data presented in Table 1 we note that 8 localities were authenticated as founded in the 13th century: Crucișor, Belțuig, Homorodul de Sus, Homorodul de Jos, Iegheriște, Ardușat, Hodișa, Mediașa. A century later, formal documents stating the existence of the localities on the opposite side of Codrului Ridge were issued. Therefore, the settlements of Giurtelec (1378), Babța (1383), Motiș (1387) are acknowledged; the villages settled in the middle of wooded lands, over the hill tops followed: Urmeniș, Băsești, Asuajul de Jos and Asuajul de Sus, Oarța de Jos, Oarța de Sus and Orțița. By the 17th century, almost all the villages in the Codrului Country area were recorded as existing in formal legal documents.

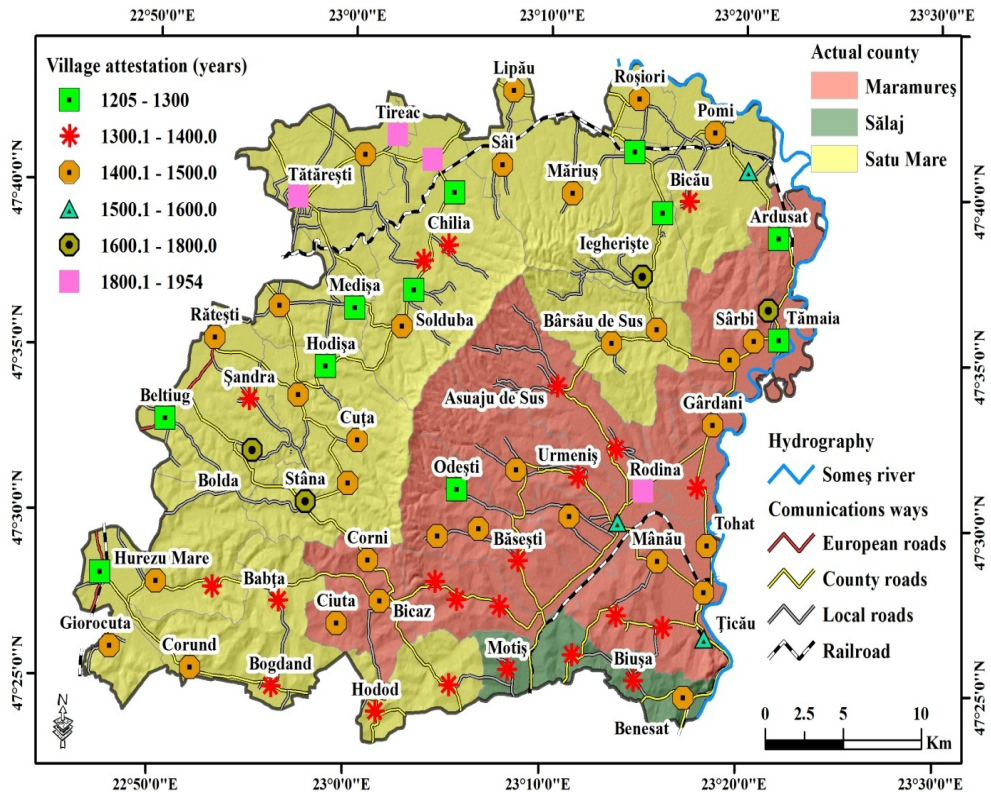


Fig. 1. Authenticated Acts of foundation of the localities in the area of the District of Codru

4. THE ADMINISTRATIVE-TERRITORIAL ORGANISATION OF THE AREA FROM DACIAN PERIOD TO PRESENT

The Dacian-Roman period is marked by the existence of the Free Dacians in the area of the District of Codru as this territory was not incorporated in the Roman Dacia Province, thanks to the natural obstacle of the woodlands the Romans should have faced. However, as a population living in the neighbouring area of the Roman limes, the Free Dacians from the District of Codru developed social and economic relationships with the colonists and the former Dacians now subdued. These relationships between the population of Free Dacians and Dacian –Romans strengthened more after 275 when the Imperial Roman army and administration were withdrawn by the emperor Aurelianus. In the second half of the 7th century, the Slavs migrate and settle temporarily on the territory of Transylvania and the area of the District of Codru, too.

Towards the end of the 9th century and in the beginning of the 10th century AD, the communities inhabiting today's Romania territory began to organise their social –economic and political life better and more thoroughly. Historical written documents and archaeological evidence provided information about the evolving civilisation of the new Romanian people. The main farming of the land and livestock breeding occupations are better illustrated in the archaeological deposits and sites and by the chronicles of the time. There have been found charred seeds of millet, wheat and barley found in earthen storage holes, plow blades, domestic animal bones, bells for cattle, fishing tools, fishing bones and scales found in various archaeological sites on the territory of the area researched and other places in Romania. Exploitation of underground raw materials and minerals at the time is proved by the foundry holes and corfs, and by the written records of gold and salt mining. (Pascu, 1971, p. 13).

As far as the level of advancement in social organisation and degree of civilisation are concerned, evidence of the period comes from the existence of rural communities being organised into ***associated rural territorial communities***, led by a judge, a cneaz (prince) or by „the council of good and old people”, elected from among the members of the community, and elected by the village community, from the evaluation of the activity of non-hierarchical communal institutions: “villagers customary law courts, villagers’ military organization to defend property and people, tax collecting organization, and distribution of rights and obligations among the members of the associated communities with respect to communal land ownership and to one another. (Pascu, 1971, p. 14).

Concerning the use of the term village community instead of the term council (obște), Ion Aurel asserted in the introduction of the work „Diplomas from Maramureș from the XIV-XVIII centuries, originated from Ioan Mihalyi of Apșa's collection”, the fact that “ we intentionally do not use the term “obște”, very much used in the years of the communist regime and which makes us think

about an egalitarian world, without social differentiations, which most often would have existed only in the Marxist-Leninism ideologists' imaginations. The word council (*obște*) has Slavonian origins and is not attested from the oldest Romanian texts. It was revigorated in the Stalinist decade at the same time as other mandatory loans from the great Eastern neighbour.

As the time went by and the communities developed, the society underwent changes in its political organisation, thus, the associated rural territorial communities were grouped into larger confederations called ***cnezate***, a type of small formations led by a prince (*cneaz*). The prince (*cneaz*) can rule either over 1-2 villages or 15-20 villages placed through a valley. Besides the fact that these princes gained from the peasants' work, they had the ability to protect these workers of the land, to organize the community's life and to ensure the safety of everyday life. The villages that were under the rule of the princes "could be inherited, sold, changed, pledged after rooted, well known and well applied legal principles which are part of the habitual dowry of the Romanian and voivodal right" (Ioan Aurel Pop in the introduction of the work "Diplomas from Maramures from the XVI-XVIII centuries, originated from Ioan Mihalyi of Apșa's collection").

The more complex formations, in which the Romanian villages were organized, are those of the voivodal district, ruled by voivods chosen by the voivodal gathering which had the supreme and military power. The IX-XI centuries are marked by the membership of the District of Codru to **Menumorut's Voivodeship** (Menumorut's dukedom-in Anonymus' chronicle), situated to the north of Banat which extended from the north of Satu Mare up to Mures and from the plain of Tisa to the Padurea Craiului Mountains (Igfon forest) and the Gates of Meseș (Pascu, 1972, p. 30). From the information given by Anonymus it results that this voivodal district had a certain dependency towards the Byzantium, the voivodeship not being conquered, Menumorut forcibly accepting the Magyar suzerainty. The 10th century is marked by the beginning of the Magyar conquest of Transylvania, conquest that took place in more stages (from the year 900 up to 1200). During this conquest the Magyar people sought to have the local rulers by their side- the princes and voivodes, a part of them joined the Magyar power due to the desire to become feudal rulers.

As the time went by and the communities developed, the society underwent changes in its political organisation, thus, the associated rural territorial communities were grouped into larger confederations called ***cnezate***, a type of small principalities or micro-national duchies, and ***voivod-led pricipalites***, more complex political and social (pre)-statal formations.

The expansion of the Magyar rule brings a new administrative and political organization, the **counties** (12 th century), the human settlements from the District of Codru being part of the Satu Mare county, also named Sătmar, and Middle Solnoc (Giurescu & Giurescu, 1976, p. 55). The settlements from the northern part of the

district are part of the Sătmar county (the ones from Colinele Codrului and from the north-east of Culmea Codrului), and the Middle Solnoc had the settlements from the current Sălaj district and the ones from the hills from the South-East of Culmea Codrului.

In the 14th century these areas were ruled by Voivod Balc (Maramureş) and Voivod Drag (Sătmar), and in the 15th century a part of the villages belonged to the noble family of Dragfi (Dragoş).

In 1849, based on the Austrian imperial constitution, the autonomy of the Transylvania principality is reestablished, and the Zarand, Crasma, Middle Solnoc counties and the Chioar district (from Partium) are once again attached to this territory. If in 1848 the administrative-territorial organization was the one of counties, September 1849 brings a new organization arranged by Transylvania's governor Ludwig von Wolghenuth - the one of districts, which were ruled by a military commander helped by a commissioner (tab. 2).

Table 2. The administrative territorial organisation in 1850-districts, constituencies and circles

District	Constituency	Circle	Component villages
Cluj Military District	Dej Constituency	Cehu Silvaniei Circle	Arduzel, Ariniş, Asuajul de Jos, Asuajul de Sus, Băiţa de sub Codru, Băseşti, Bârsăul de Jos, Bârsăul de Sus, Benesat, Bicz, Biuşa, Ciuta, Corni, Gărdani, Giurtelecu Hododului, Mânău Motiş, Oarţa de Jos, Oarţa de Sus, Odeşti, Ortiţa Sălişte, Sălsig, Someş Uileac, Stremţ, Tămăşeşti Tohat, Ulciug, Ulmeni, Urmeniş
	Şimleu Silvaniei Constituency	Eriu Circle	Babţa, Bogdand, Giorocuţa, Hodod, Corund, Supuru de Jos

Source: *The 1850 census, Transylvania- Rotariu, T., Semeniuc, Maria, Mezei, E.*

This organisation did not last long, until May 12 1851, when based on the imperial rescript the Transylvania territory was divided into 5 counties (Sibiu, Alba Iulia, Cluj, Bistriţa, Odorhei) with circles and subcircles, organization which resisted until the beginning of the 7th decade (tab. 3).

It appears that this century is fated to some frequent changes concerning the administrative-territorial organization of the Land of Codru, a fact also argued by the decree issued in March 24 1861 based on the cancellation of Transylvania's absolutist administration and the return to the old administrative unities, **counties**, unities present before the year 1848 (Table 4).

Table 3. The administrative-territorial organisation in circles (cercuri) and hundreds (plase)

Circle (cercul)	Hundred (Plase)	Component villages
Șimleul Silvaniei	Cehu Silvaniei	Arduzel, Ariniș, Asuajul de Jos, Asuajul de Sus, Babța, Băița de sub Codru, Băsești, Bârsăul de Jos, Bârsăul de Sus, Benesat, Bicz, Biușa, Ciuta, Corni, Gârdani, Giurtelec, Hododului, Motiș, Oarța de Jos, Oarța de Sus, Odești, Orțița, Săliște, Sălsig, Someș Uileac, Hodod Stremț, Tămășești, Țicău, Tohat, Ulciug, Ulmeni, Urmeniș
	Tășnad	Bogdand, Giorocuța, Corund, Supuru de Jos

Source: *The 1857 census, Transylvania, 1996, editors: Rotariu, T., Semeniuc, Maria, Mezei, E.*

Table 4. The administrative-territorial organisation into counties and hundreds

County	Hundred (Plase)	Component villages
SATU MARE	Ardu	Beltiug, Boldă, Stâna, Gerăușa, Hodișa, Homorodu de Jos, Homorodu de Mijloc, Homorodu de Sus, Sâi, Socond, Racova, Necopoi, Cuța, Mediaș, Hurezu Mare, Chilia, Tătărești, Șandra, Rătești, Soconzel, Solduba
	Baia Mare	Ardusat, Fărcașa, Tămaia, Sârbi, Buzești
	Satu Mare	Lipău
	Seini	Borlești, Iegheriște, Poiana Codrului, Măriuş, Bicău, Pomi, Crucișor, Roșiori
SĂLAJ	Cehu Silvaniei	Arduzel, Ariniș, Asuajul de Jos, Asuajul de Sus, Babța, Băița de sub Codru, Băsești, Bârsăul de Jos, Bârsăul de Sus, Benesat, Bicz, Biușa, Ciuta, Corni, Gârdani, Giurtelec, Hododului, Motiș, Oarța de Jos, Oarța de Sus, Odești, Orțița, Săliște, Sălsig, Someș-Uileac, Stremț, Tămășești, Hodod, Tohat, Ulciug, Ulmeni, Urmeniș, Bogdand
	Tășnad	Giorocuța, Corund, Supuru de Jos

Source: *The 1869 census, Transylvania, 1996, eds: Rotariu, T., Semeniuc, Maria, Mezei, E.*

The end of World War I is marked by a good news, the one of stitching to the “mother-country” of the historic provinces Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bucovina. As a consequence, in 11/24 of December 1918 a new decree was issued regarding Transylvania’s organization, according to which this province has been divided in 23 districts, made of shires the village being the inferior unity. Based on this the territory of District of Codru belongs to the districts Sălaj and Sătmar.

During the reign of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza, according to the princely decree no. 495/1862 and The Act of Law no. 396/1864 the main administrative territorial division of the state was the **judetul (county)**. Each county was subdivided into **plase (hundreds or districts)**² led by subprefect, and each hundred was divided into **communes (villages)**.

Table 5. The administrative territorial organisation into counties, hundred (plăși) and communes in District of Codru

County	Hundred (Plasa)	Commune	Component Villages
SĂLAJ	Plasa Cehu Silvaniei	Arghihat	Asuajul de Jos, Asuajul de Sus
		Băița	Odești, Urmeniș
		Bârsăul de Sus	Bârsăul de Jos
		Băsești	Săliște, Urmeniș
		Bicaz	Corni, Stremț
		Biușa	Uileac
		Bogdand	Babța, Corund
		Hodod	Ciuta
		Leleiu	Giurtelecu Hododului
SĂLAJ	Plasa Cehu Silvaniei	Oarța de Jos	Moțiș, Oarța de Sus, Orțița
		Sălsig	Gârdani, Mânău
		Silimeghiu	Arduzel, Chelița, Tohat, Țicău
SĂTMAR	Plasa Arded	Homorodul de Jos	Chilia, Necopoi
		Medișa	Gerăușa, Hodișa, Homorodul de Mijloc, Homorodul de Sus, Solduba
		Socond	Cuța, Soconzel
	Plasa Baia Mare	Ardusat	Buzești
		Fărcașa	Sârbi, Tămaia
	Plasa Seini	Crucișor	Bicău, Huta (Igheriște), Poiana Codrului
		Pomi	Borlești
		Valea Vinului	Măriuş, Roșiori

Source: *The Dictionary of Transylvania, the Banat and other incorporated territories 1922-* Martinovici, C., Istrati, N.; *The 1869 census, Transylvania*, 1996 Rotariu, T., Semeniuc, Maria, Mezei, E.

² Plasa (Hundred) – a subdivision of a county in the former administrative organisation of Romania

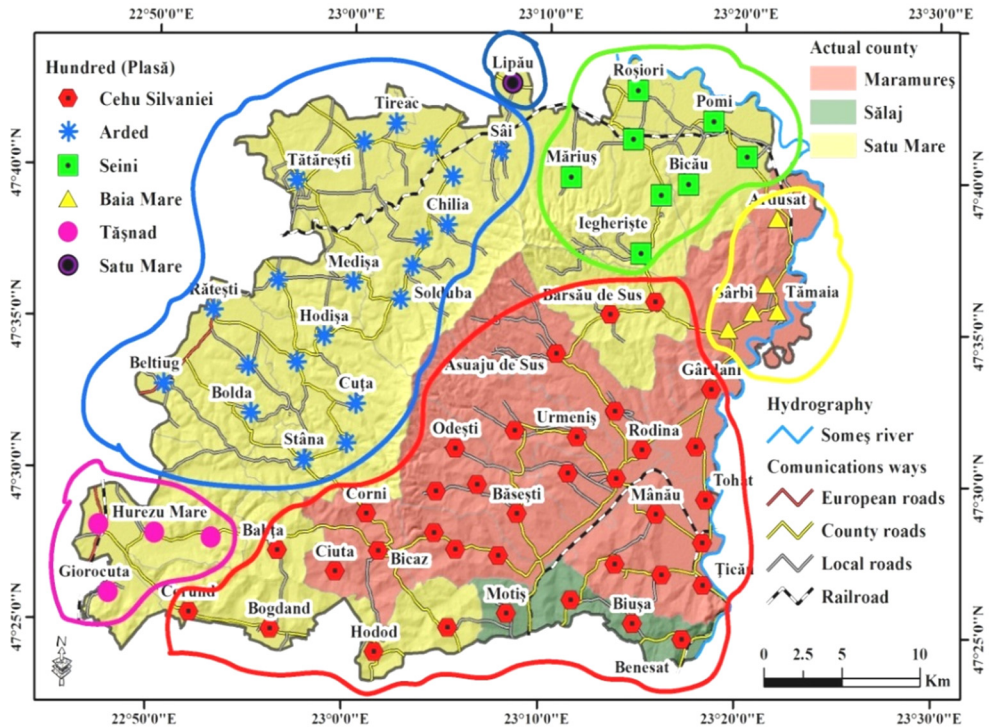


Fig. 2. The administrative territorial organisation into hundred (plăși) and communes in District of Codru

On 3rd August 1929, the Romanian government of the Peasants' Party, led by Iuliu Maniu, adopted a new law of the administrative-territorial organisation of the country, through which decentralisation of local administration was aimed. The provisions of this act stated that the territory of Romania was divided into **7 ministerial directorates**. Consequently, the researched area is incorporated into the Ministerial Directorate of Cluj. However, this local administration reorganisation lasted for only two years.

The last interwar local administration and territorial reorganisation reform was implemented during the reign of King Carol II. Starting with 14th August 1938, Romania's territory was divided into units called **ținuturi** (approximate translation **lands**). **Ținutul** was conceived as a "territorial constituency" with juridical personality, able to represent local people's interests and exert its rights and responsibilities for general local administration (Săgeată, R., 2013, p. 8). But this territorial division lasted for only two years. In 1940, the **counties** regain their status of legal entities. In the light of the 1938 reform of local administration, the territory of the District of Codru belonged to the land of Someș.

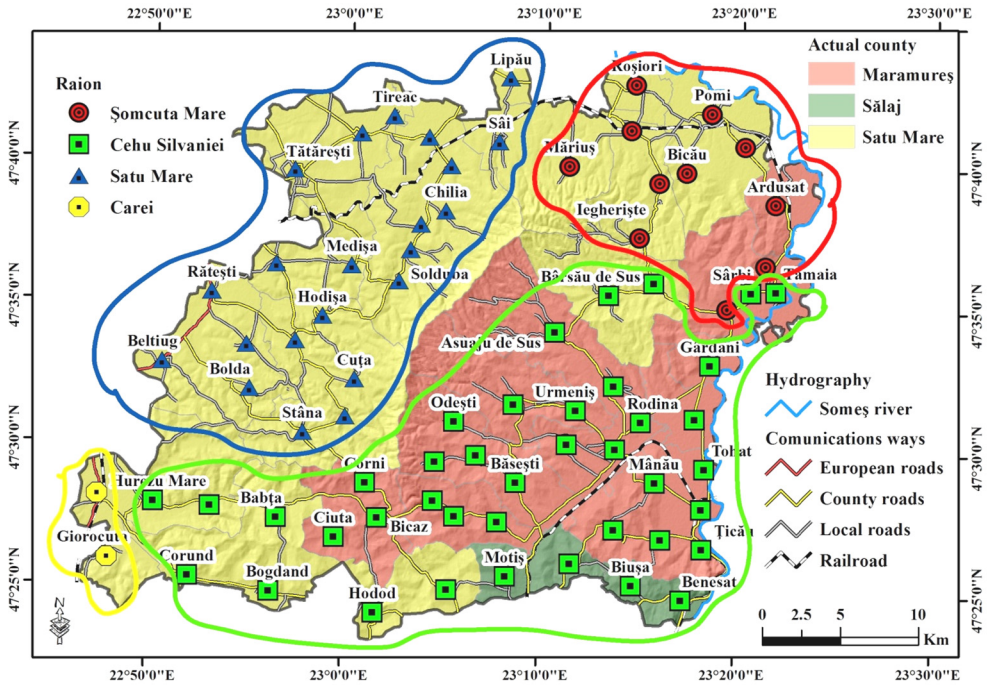


Fig. 3. The Administrative- territorial organisation into raion of the area of the District of Codru

In 1945 the first pro-Soviet government came into power in Romania. This government brought significant changes to the local administration of the country. Thus, in 1950, according to the provisions of The Local Government Act no.5/6th September 1950, the division into counties was eliminated; all divisions were replaced by regions made up of *raioane* (approximately *rayons* or *departments*), *cities and communes*. These division units were no longer based on the criterion of economic complexity, geographical and historical specificity, but were only meant to support in a straightforward manner the decisions and rule of central administrative and political state bodies.

This new administrative territorial organisation, imposed from abroad by the Soviet power officials, to mirror their model of local government led to repeated adjustments to administrative policies. Thus, in 1958, after the Soviet troops were withdrawn from the Romanian territory, the political Communist leaders in Bucharest distanced themselves from Moscow's politics and a new administrative-territorial organisation was established. On the 17th February 1968, the Local Government Act introduced two basic levels of local government, the territorial units being the *județ (county)*, at the higher level and the *city or commune* at the lower level.

Analyzing from a comparative point of view, the administrative-territorial organisation of the settlement network from the District of Codru in two different moments, we can see that, based on the 1894 organisation, the District of Codru spread the span of two counties (Sălaj and Maramureş), and at present this land spreads over a surface of three counties (Maramureş, Sălaj, Satu Mare), some of the villages that belonged to Sălaj have passed to Maramureş, for exemple, Băseşti, the town of Ulmeni (town since 2004, after a vote), Băiţa, Sălsig, Oarţa de Jos, Bicăz, etc. Also, one can observe how some movements of villages from one county to another, like Manau from Sălsig to the town of Ulmeni, Bicău from Cuscior to Pomi, Odeşti from Băiţa de sub Codru to Băseşti, Motiş from Oarţa de Jos to the town of Cehu Silvaniei, etc.

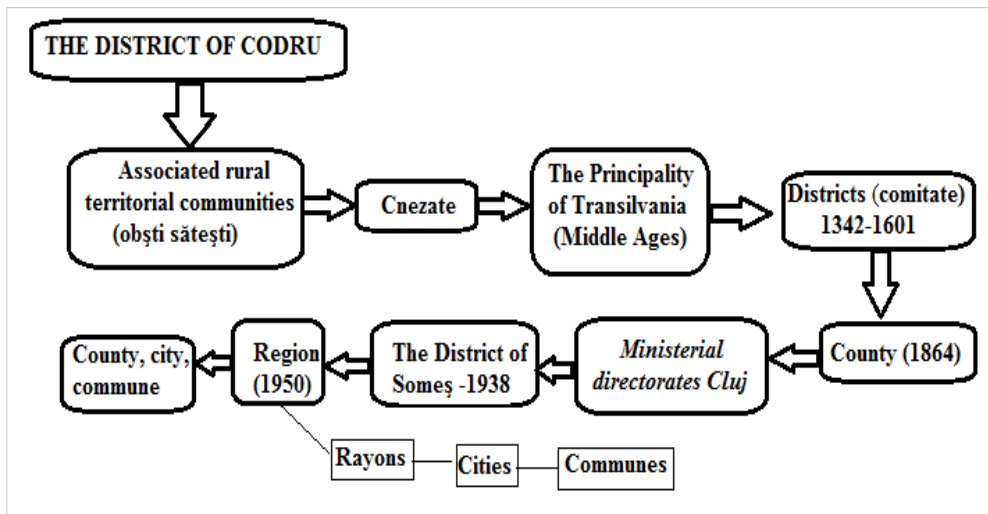


Fig. 4. The Evolution of the administrative- territorial organisation of the District of Codru

After 1968 the territory corresponding to the Districts of Codru overlaps three administrative units: the county of Maramureş, the county of Satu Mare and the county of Sălaj. Belonging to the three administrative units had a beneficial effect over the foresters because it makes the 3 administrative units cooperate towards developing this ethnographical region, to make known the cultural values of the foresters, to bring them out of anonymity.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Reviewing the archaeological discoveries and written records relative to the area of the District of Codru we note that this territory, as well as the whole national territory, has been inhabited since early stages of human history, and that the earliest settlement dates back to the Neolithic Age, finding itself under various foreign dominations. A fact is certain, that the district never was part of the Romanian province, but it was occupied by the Magyar people, in that era being attested most of the villages of the land. Worth a mention is the fact that Romanian villages from the Land of Forests, as well as the whole of Transylvania do not date from when they are attested, but are much older. They were attested in writing only when they were given responsibilities and attributes towards the new lords to whom they were given, respectively during the Magyar rule. Transylvania was conquered fully by the Magyar kings in the 11th century, so they are attested since that time.

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