

Welcome to Virtual Banat!



Banat is the historical province lying in the south-eastern extremity of the territorial entity called Mitteleuropa.

The area of Banat, square-shaped, has the following natural borders: the Mureș River in the north, the Tisa River in the west, and the Danube in the south; its eastern border is a route that crosses the Southern Carpathians in the west and the Western Carpathians in the south.

Banat covers an area of 28,526 km², which today is divided into three regions. The largest of them, about two thirds, belongs to Romania (18,966 km²); one third belongs to Serbia, and a small part, 284 km², belongs to Hungary. From the administrative point of view, today's territory of Banat is divided

as follows:

First-time events in Banat

1002 – The first monastery on the territory of present-day Romania was at Morisena (today **Cenad** Village, Timis County). Its patron saint was St. John the Baptist and it was a monastery of Orthodox monks.

1030 – The first school on the current Romanian territory was opened at **Cenad** (Timis County). The teaching language was Latin.

About 1179 – the Abbey at **Igris**, founded by the Cistercian monks of the Pontigny

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In Romania:

- the whole Timiș County
- Caraș-Severin County, except for Băuțar, Bucova, Cornișoru and Preveciori, which all form Băuțar commune
- Arad County, only the area south of the Mureș River
- Mehedinți County, only Baia Nouă, Dubova, Eibenthal, Ieșelnița, Orșova and Svinița. Several localities of the traditional Banat sank disappeared under the Iron Gate reservoir.
- Hunedoara County – Sălciva and Pojoga

In Serbia:

- the part of Vojvodina situated east of the Tisa
- North Banat District (Severni Banat in Serbian) (except for Ada, Senta and Kanjiza municipalities, located e west of the Tisa)
- Central Banat District (Srednji Banat in Serbian)
- South Banat District (Južni Banat in Serbian)

In central Serbia:

- Pančevački Rit, the area that forms the part of Palilula municipality to the west of the Danube and is included in the Belgrade metropolitan area

In Hungary:

- a small part of the Csongrád county (*comitatus*), namely the area located in the southern angle formed by the Tisa and the Mureş, as far as the state border with Romania and Serbia

Brief Historic Presentation

After the repression of the 1848 revolution, in order to reward the devoted Serbians who sided with the Imperial authorities during the conflicts, the Vojvodina of Serbia and the Tamiš Banat (*Woivodtschaft Serbien und Temescher Banat*) were formed following the Emperor's decree of November 18 1849. The province included territories of Banat (except the military border), Bačka and Syrmia. Its ruler was the Grand Voivode, one of the Emperor's numerous titles. The province was ruled by an Imperial lieutenancy led by a governor and was organised in five districts (Kreise) divided into sub-districts (Bezirke):

- Timișoara, with Aradu Nou, Lipova, Buziaș, Ciacova, Vârșeț and Timișoara sub-districts (193 villages and 280,808 inhabitants)
- Lugoj, with the Făget, Lugoj, Bocșa and Oravița sub-districts (234 villages and 219,803 inhabitants)
- Becicherecu Mare, with Törökbecse, Kikinda Mare, Sânnicolau Mare, Biled, Jimbolia, Mодоș and Becicherecu Mare (108 villages and 336,763 inhabitants)
- Neusatz (Novi Sad)
- Sombor

The last two districts included territories outside historical Banat. The population of the province was very mixed: 347,459 Romanians, 321,110 Serbs, 335,080 Germans, 221,845 Hungarians and other ethnic groups. The capital of the province was Timișoara. The official languages were German and Serbian.

The Vojvodina of Serbia and the Tamiš Banat province was abolished in October 1860 and the governing system reverted to Hungarian *comitatens* in Banat and Bačka. Syrmia was incorporated into Slavonia. The administrative rulers of the *comitate* were the *primcomite* (the prefect), the *vicecomite* (the subprefect), the *pretors* (head of subdistricts), and the *comitatens* Congregation.

Romanian Banat

In 1950, following the Soviet model, the communist authorities introduced the administrative-territorial organisation on regions by Law no 5/September 6 1950. Although it lasted only until 1968, the division of the national territory into regions and raions underwent major changes in time. Initially, the territory of Romanian Banat was distributed into three regions that were very similar to the current counties: Arad (belonging to Banat only partly), Timișoara and Severin. This structure lasted only for two years, until 1952, when the Severin region was abolished and the territories of the remaining regions were redistributed. In 1956, the Arad region also disappeared and in 1960 the Timișoara region was renamed Banat. A short description of these successive changes is given below:

Arad region, with its capital Arad, comprised, in 1952, an area only a little larger than the current Arad county. In the beginning, it did not include the Sânnicolau Mare area that was incorporated after the 1952 territorial reorganisation.

Between 1952 and 1956, the region had six raions: Arad, Criș (capital at Chișineu Criș), Gurahonț, Ineu, Lipova and Sânnicolaul Mare, only the last two belonging to Banat. In 1956, once this region abolished, its territory was redistributed between Timișoara and Oradea regions.

Severin region, located in southern Banat, had the shortest life: only two years (between 1950 and 1952). The capital city was Caransebeș. It covered an area only a bit larger than today's Caraș-Severin county and also included the traditionally Banat area lying in the south-west of Mehedinți county today.

At first, Timișoara region, with the capital at Timișoara, covered an area only a little larger than the current territory of Timiș county. At the time, it was divided in three raions: Deta, Sânnicolau Mare and Timișoara. In 1952 it lost Sânnicolau Mare, which was incorporated into Arad region, but it was attached the whole Severin region. Between 1952 and 1956, the latter had nine raions: Almaș (Mehadia), Caransebeș, Deta, Făget, Lugoj, Moldova Nouă, Oravița, Reșița and Timișoara. In 1956, by Decree no 12 regarding amendments to Law no 5/1950 for the division into raions of the territory of the People's Republic of Romania – PRR (published in the Official Bulletin of PRR of January 10 1956), the southern part of the former Arad region was added to this region.

Banat region was established by Law no 3/December 27 1960 for the improvement of the administrative division of the RPR's territory. It comprised not only the former region Timișoara, but also territories of the former Arad region. Its capital was Timișoara. It covered today's counties of Timiș, Caraș-Severin and partially Arad (the southern part), including the municipality of Arad, as far as

Macea and Pâncota, and a major part in the north of the Mureș, outside the traditional Banat. Consequently, in 1961, this territorial administrative entity reminding of historical Banat covered 21,000 km² and had 1,234,340 inhabitants.

Banat region was divided into 12 raions and 16 towns, of which 4 (Timișoara, Reșița, Arad and Lugoj) enjoyed a special statute, that of regional towns. The 321 communes comprised 601 villages. The raions of the region were Arad, Bozovici, Caransebeș, Deta, Făget, Lipova, Lugoj, Moldova Nouă, Oravița, Orșova, Sânnicolau Mare, Timișoara, but also the regional town of Reșița, whose area and number of localities were those of a raion.

December 18 1964 – names of localities were changed by **Decree 799**.

In 1968, the raions and the regions ceased to exist by Law no 2/ February 16 1968 and the former *județ* (county) name was reintroduced for new administrative-territorial entities. In the case of Banat, these new divisions are more similar to the 1950 regions than to the pre-war counties. On this occasion, the south-eastern corner of Banat, including the town of Orșova, was attached to Mehedinți, a county from Oltenia, while about 40 villages in northern Banat, the town of Lipova and Aradu Nou were attached to Arad County. To top it all, Caraș-Severin county received several villages from Hunedoara, while two Banat villages near the Mureș were incorporated into Hunedoara County. This is how the splitting of Banat that started at the end of World War I went on and today we can find Banat localities in five Romanian counties, a Hungarian county, and three districts and a metropolitan area of two Serbian provinces. Not to mention the unprecedented situation that three large cities outside Banat – Belgrade, Szeged and Arad – have districts in Banat.

By the same Law no 2/1968, some names of localities were changed, while other localities disappeared because of numerous administrative unifications.

Serbian Banat

Chronological references

- November 25, 1918 – The People's Assembly of Serbs and other Slavs gathered at Novi Sad to proclaim the unification of Vojvodina (Banat, Bačka and Baranja) with the Kingdom of Serbia.
- 1918 - 1922 – Serbian Banat formed the Veliki Bečkerek district.
- 1922 - 1929 – The territory of Serbian Banat was divided between the provinces (oblast) of Belgrade and Podunavlje, the latter with

the capital at Smederevo.

- October 3, 1929 - April 1941 – The country's territory is divided into banovinas. Most of the Serbian Banat territory was incorporated into Dunavska Banovina, with the capital at Novi Sad. The town of Belgrade, together with Zemun and Pancevo, formed a separate administrative unit of banovinas.

- April 1941 – October 23, 1944 – Serbian Banat, Šumadija and Braničevo formed a smaller Dunavska Banovina as part of the puppet Serbian state under German military occupation.

Banat was under Serbian authority only in theory, as it was administered by the German minority.

It was ruled by a *vice-ban* (Vize-Banus) who was formally a subordinate of the ministry of internal affairs in Belgrade. The official languages were German and Serbian.

In that time, Serbian Banat was divided in the following administrative subdivisions (districts): Pančevo, Vršac, Bela Crkva, Kovin, Jaša Tomić, Veliki Bečkerek, Velika Kikinda, Novi Becej, Nova Kanjiža, Kovačica and Alibunar.

The whole Banat administration came from the German minority. The local high officials were appointed by the puppet government in Belgrade, at the suggestion of the vice-ban. Even the judges and the notaries were German. The postal, railway and fiscal administration was in the hands of the German ethnic group.

The civil administration of the German minority was doubled by the German military occupation under the rule of a military commandment.

- After the war – The province of Vojvodina was established based on the former Danube Banovina.

- 1948 - Borča and Ovča were included in the administrative area of Belgrade.

- April 7, 1963 – The Socialist Autonomous Province Vojvodina with the capital at Novi Sad was established. It also comprised the Serbian Banat territory.

- July 5, 1989 – The autonomous statute of Vojvodina was revoked.

- September 28, 1990 – The Autonomous Province of Vojvodina was established.

Evolution of population on the territory of Serbian Banat in 1910 - 1991 (number of inhabitants):										
	1910	1921	1931	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	
Ethnic groups										
Serbs	229,568	235,148	261,123	358,067	374,258	423,837	434,815	424,765	423,475	
Germans	125,374	126,519	120,541	17,522	-	-	165	-	-	
Hungarians	108,662	98,463	95,867	110,446	112,683	111,944	103,093	90,445	76,153	
Romanians	73,303	66,433	62,365	55,678	55,094	54,447	49,455	43,474	35,935	
Slovaks	16,223	17,595	17,900	20,685	21,229	22,306	22,139	21,392	19,903	
Others	13,270	14,840	27,783	39,238	53,899	43,334	56,092	92,808	93,924	
Total	566,400	559,096	585,579	601,626	617,163	655,868	665,759	672,884	648,390	
Note: The population of Borča and Ovča, localities that were included within Belgrade's administrative territory in 1948, was subtracted from the population of Serbian Banat. The data used in this table were taken from the Hungarian and Yugoslavian (Serbian) censuses conducted in the corresponding years.										

Territorial Exchange

A protocol concerning several Danube islands and an exchange of localities between Romania and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was signed in Belgrade in November 24, 1923. As a result, in 1924, Jimbolia (until then Dzombolj), Checea Croată, Beba Veche, Pusta Cherestur, Ciorda and Iam, that had belonged to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were incorporated into Romania, while Modoș (Modoš, today Jaša Tomić), Părdani (Ninčičevo, today Međa), Șurian (today Šurjan), Căptălan (today Busenje), Krivobara (today Markovićevo) and Gaiu Mare (today Veliki Gaj), that had been part of Romania, were ceded to the mentioned kingdom. Jimbolia was ceded to the Romanian State on April 10 1924.

Maps of Banat [2]

References:

Lemkin, Raphaël - *Axis rule in occupied Europe. Laws of Occupation. Analysis of Government Proposals for Redress*, The Lawbook Exchange, ltd., Clark, New Jersey, 2005, pp. 252-253, 603

Documentary by **Ionel Crăciun**

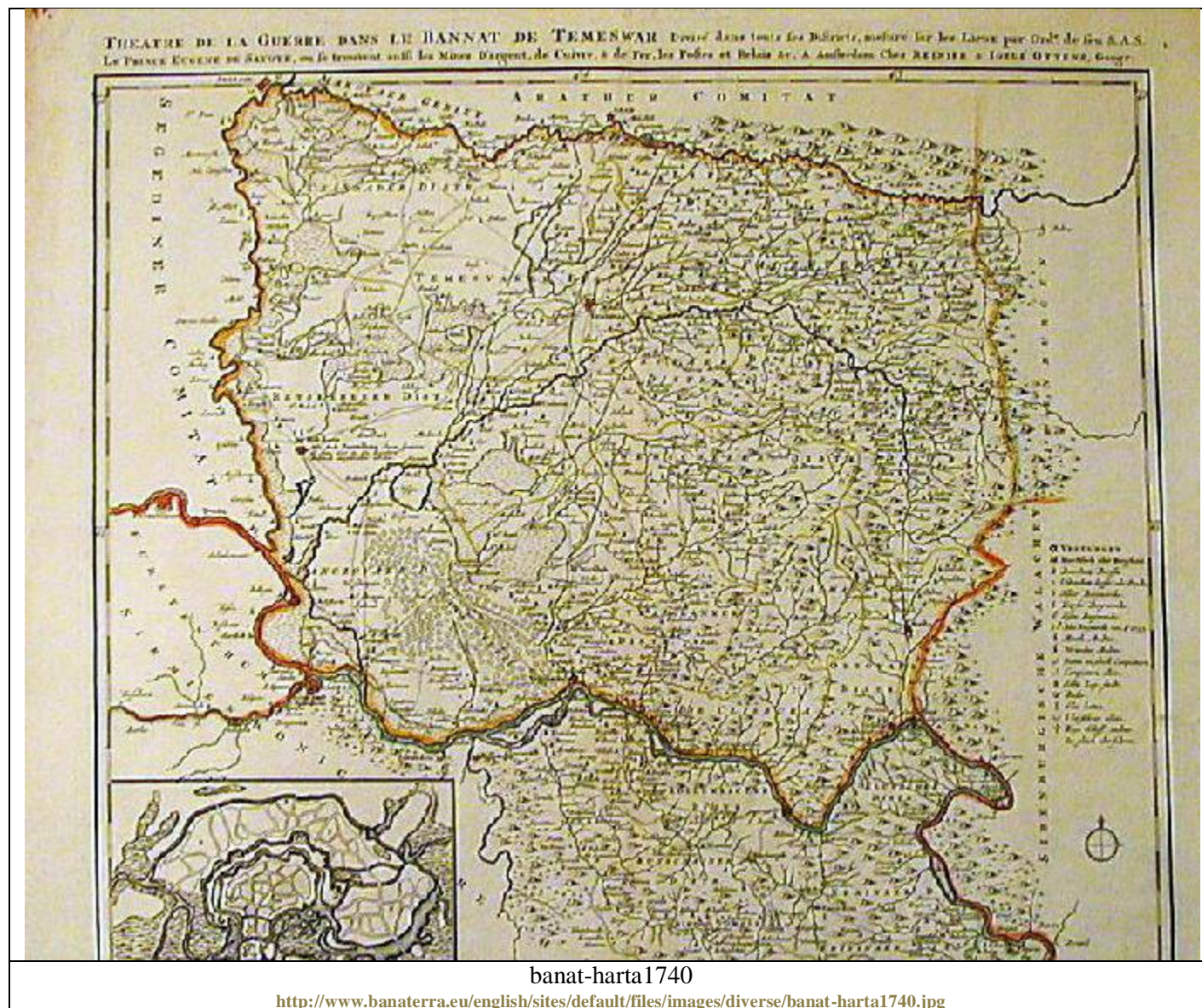
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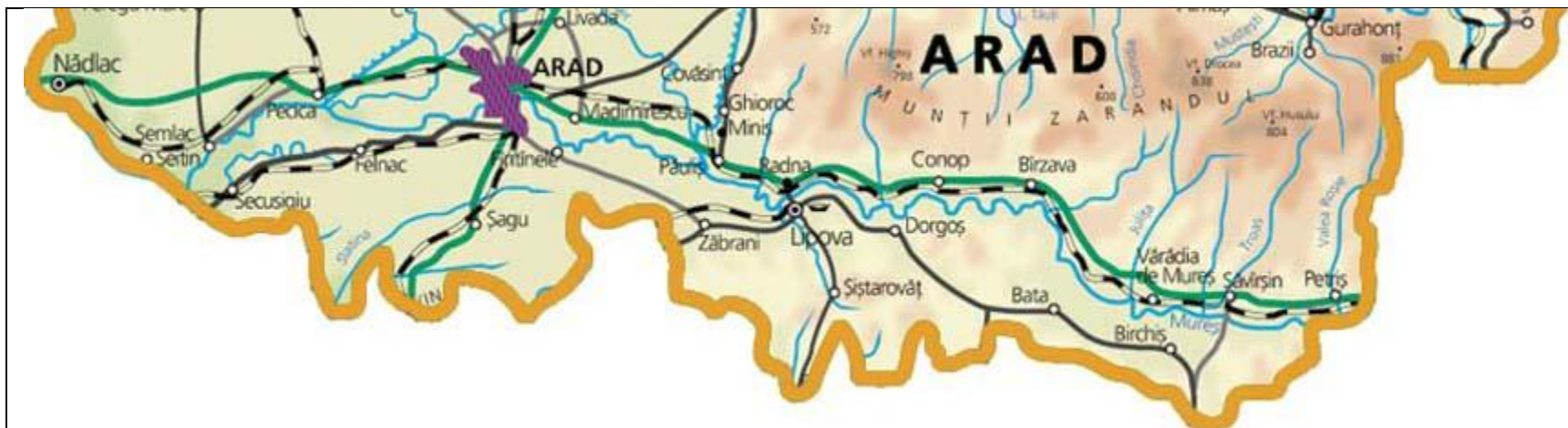
[1] <http://www.banaterra.eu/english/sites/default/files/images/diverse/banat-harta1740.jpg>

[2] <http://www.banaterra.eu/romana/romana/harti/index.htm>



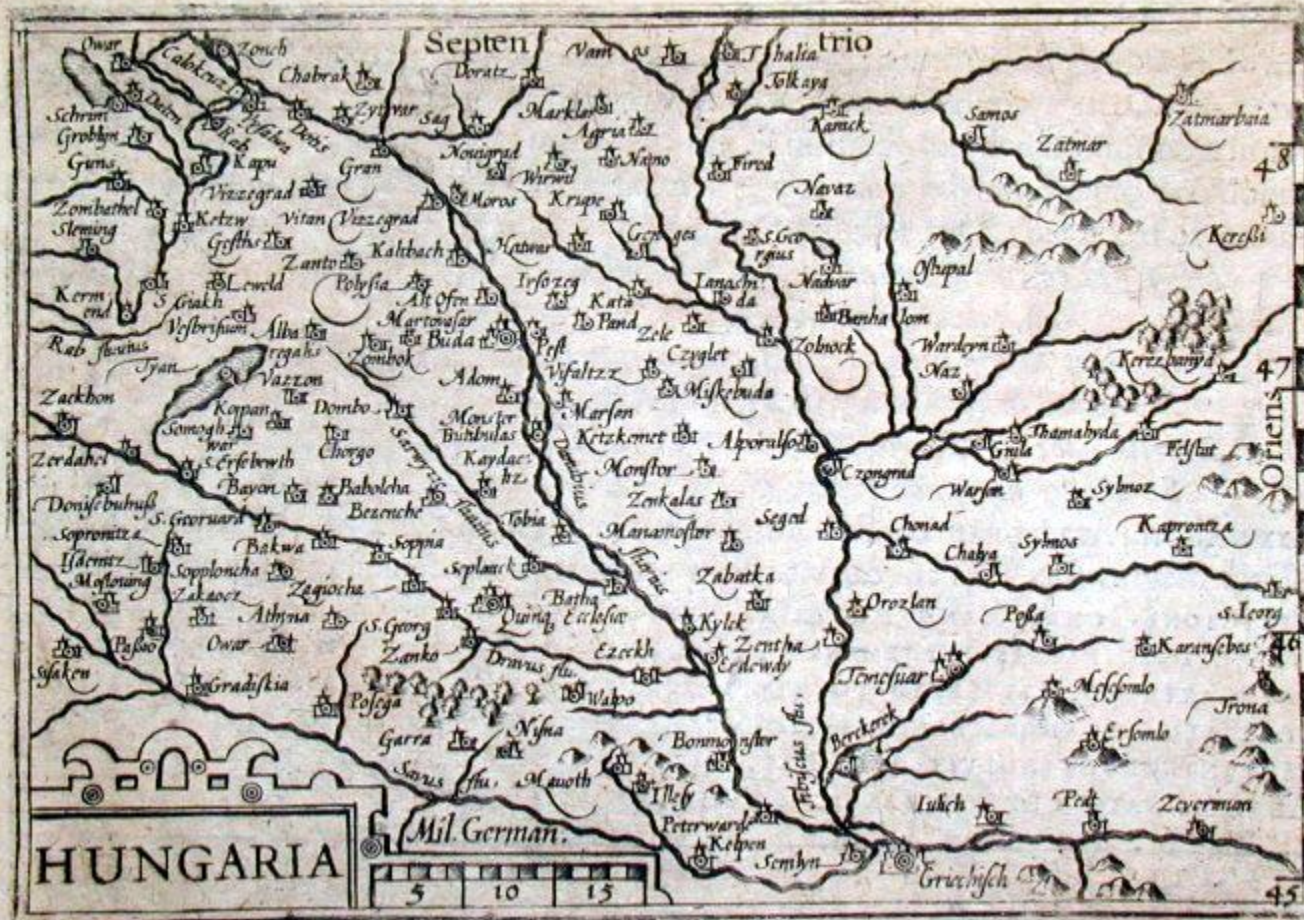
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Arad 2006

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Banat 1602

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Banat 1683

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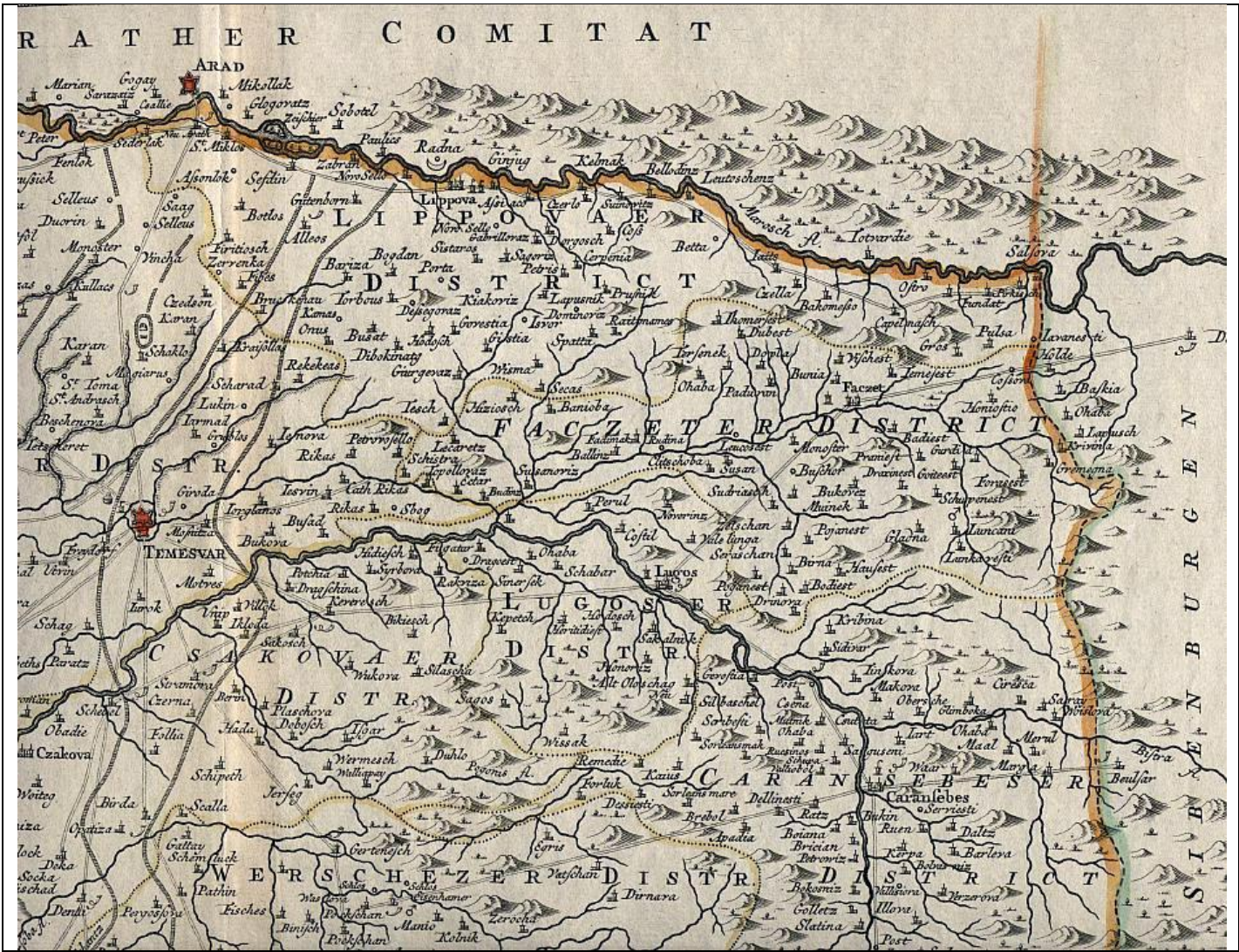
Timisoara 1716

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Banat 1740 a

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Banat 1740 b

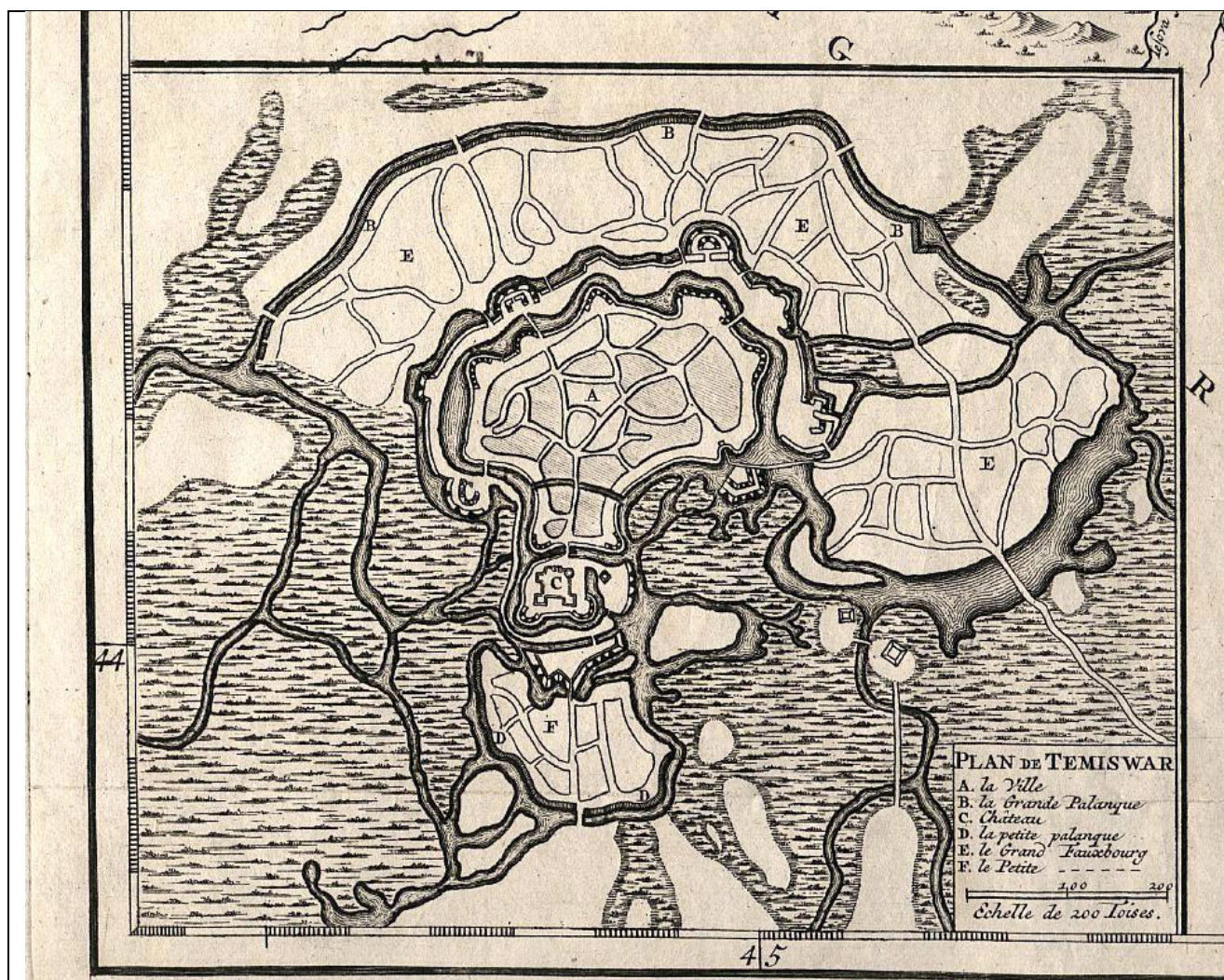
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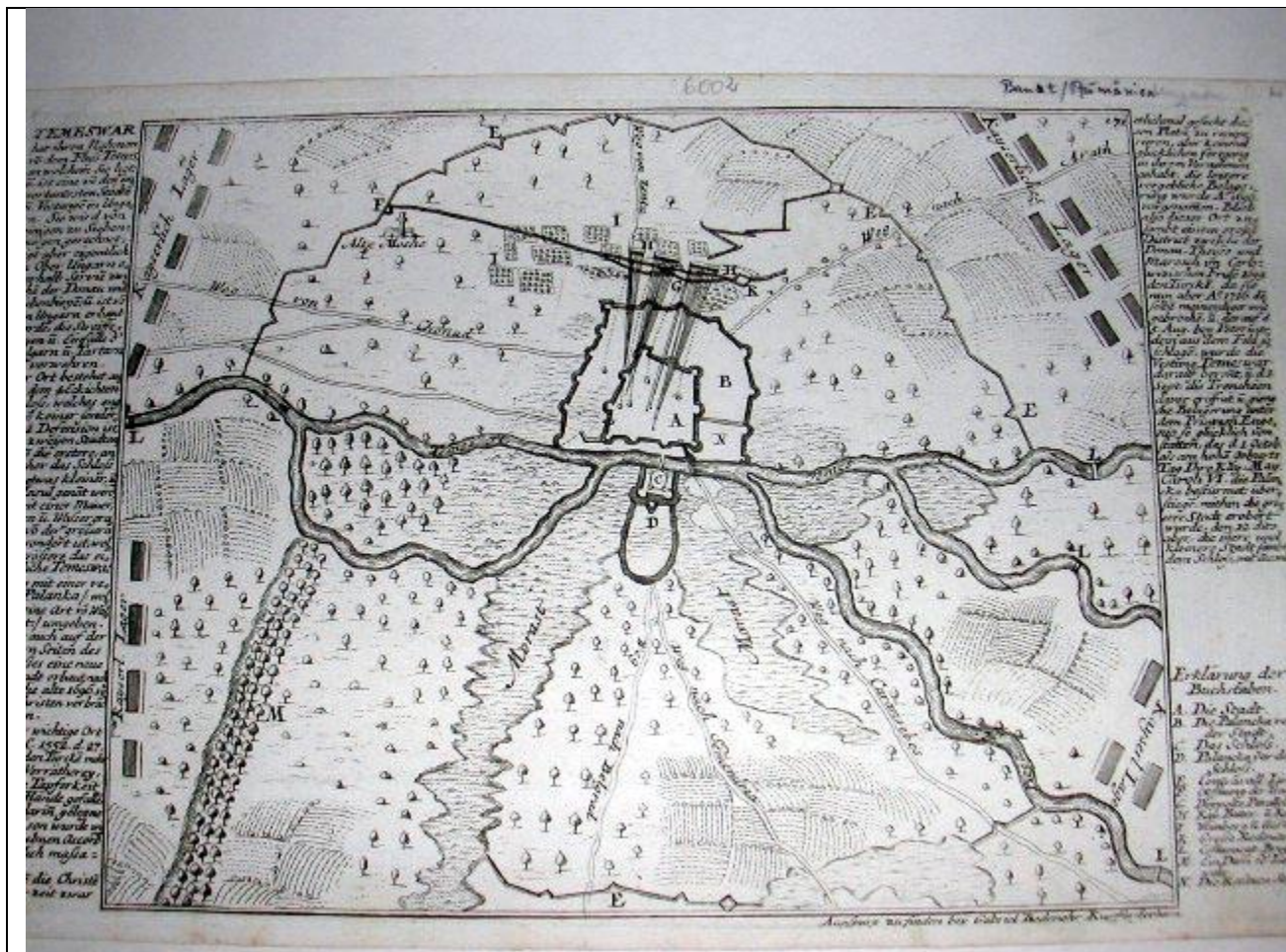
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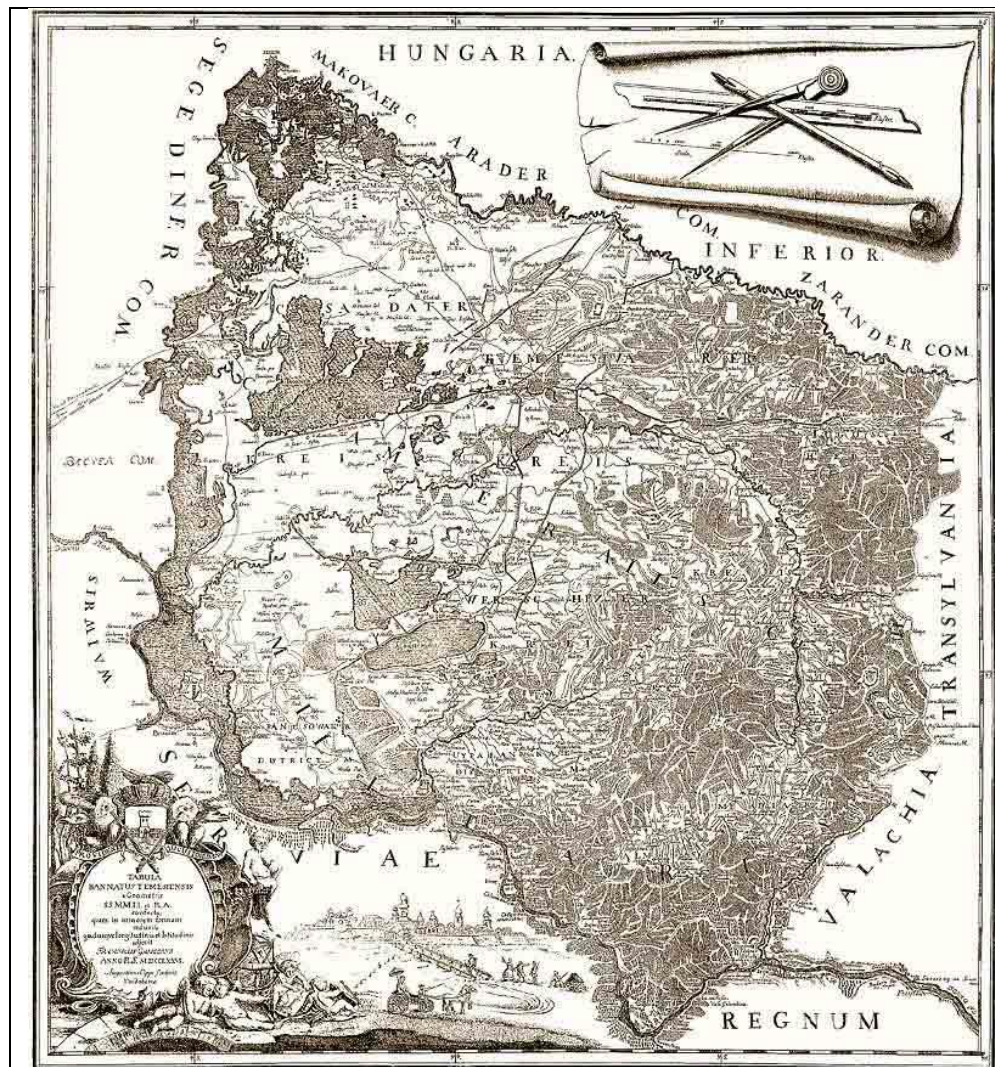
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Timisoara 1750

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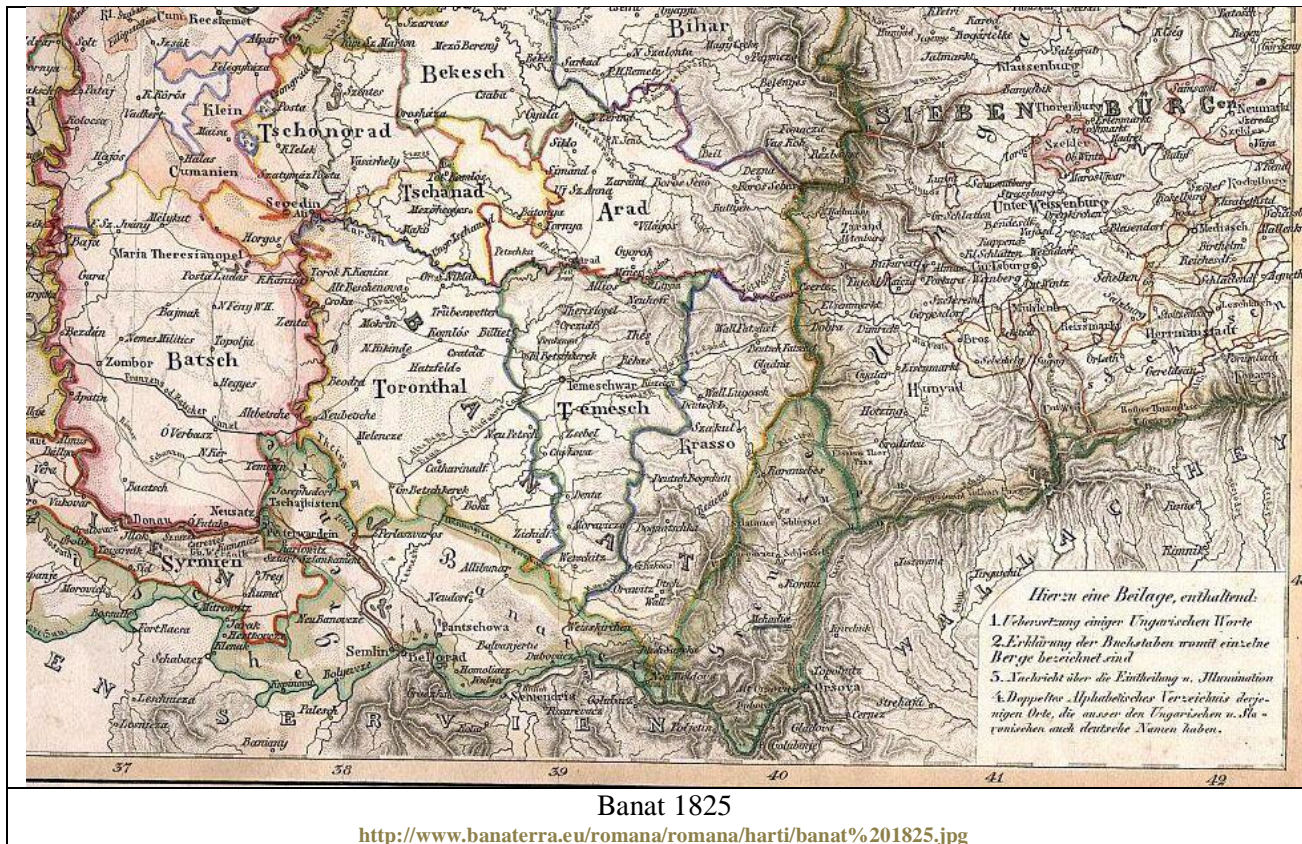
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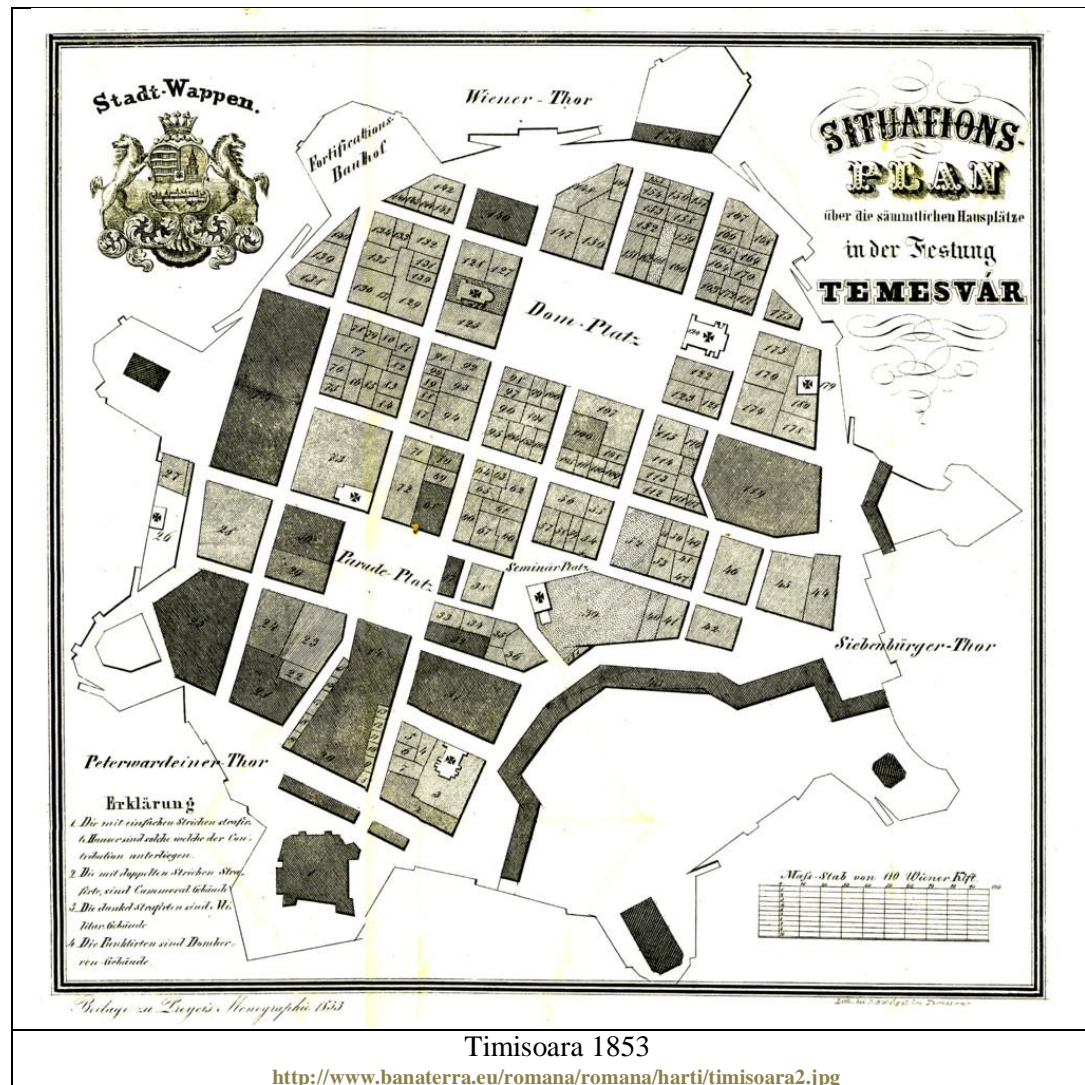
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Banat 1789

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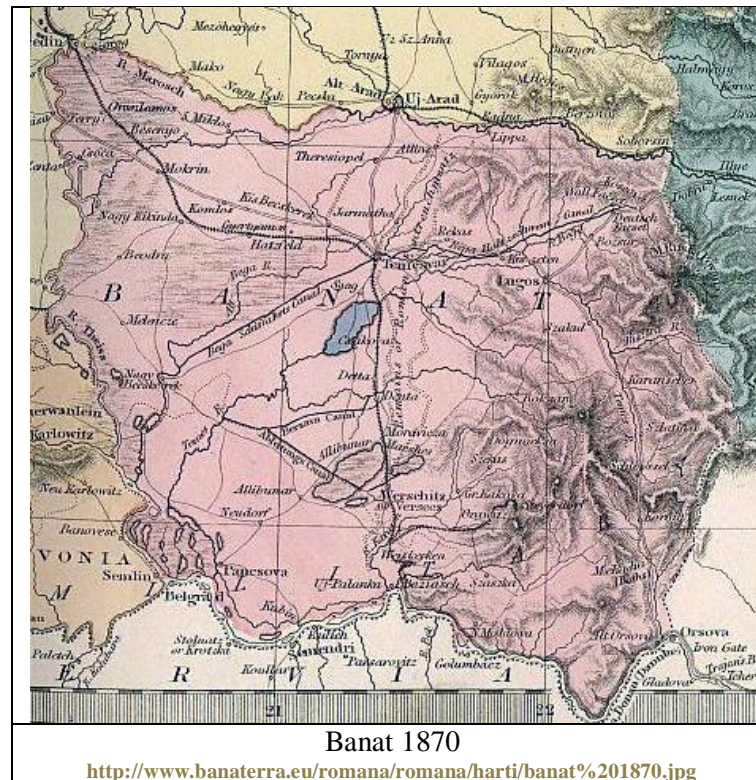


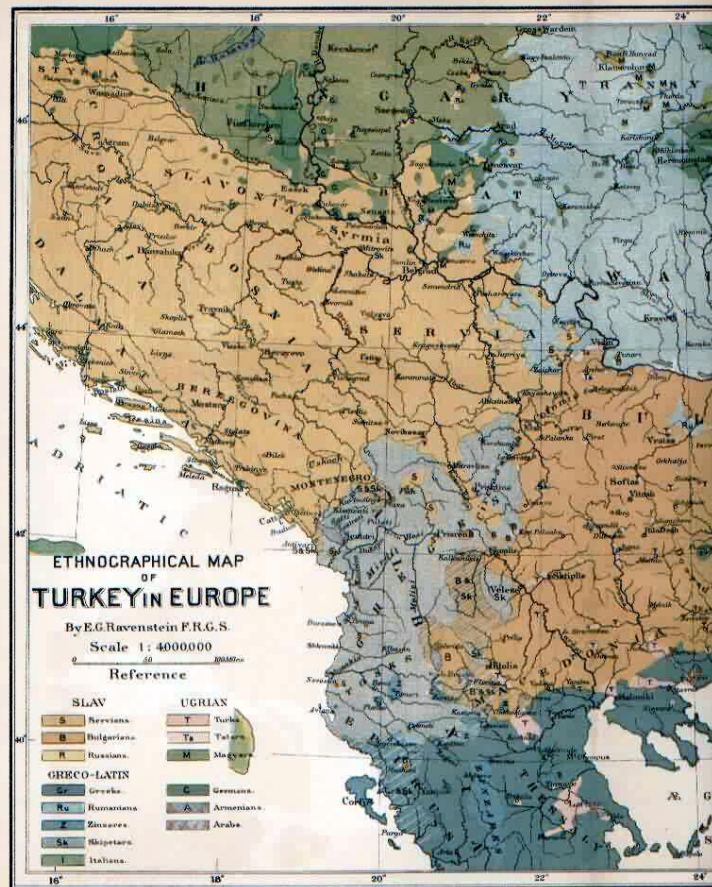




Banat 1856

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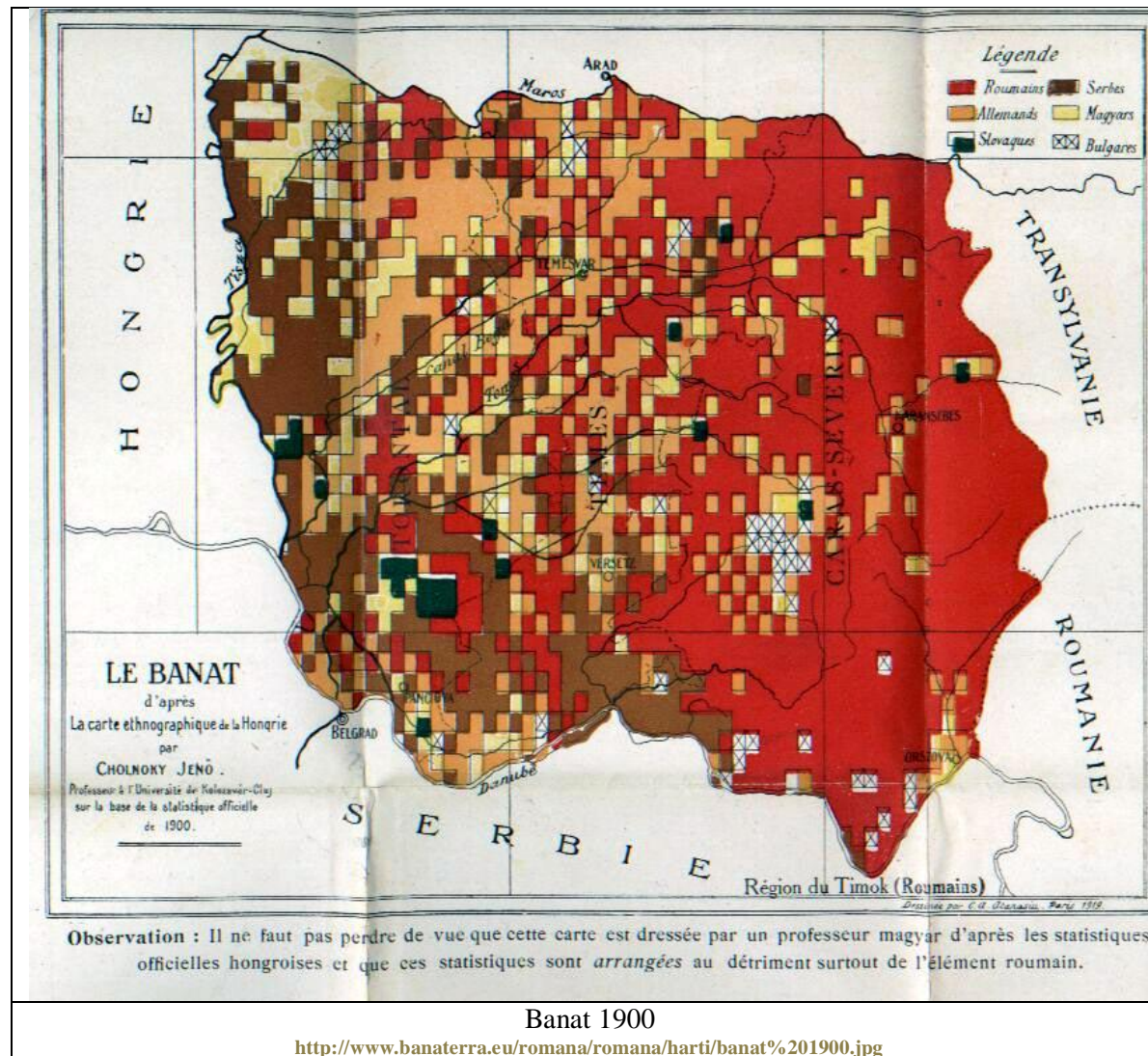
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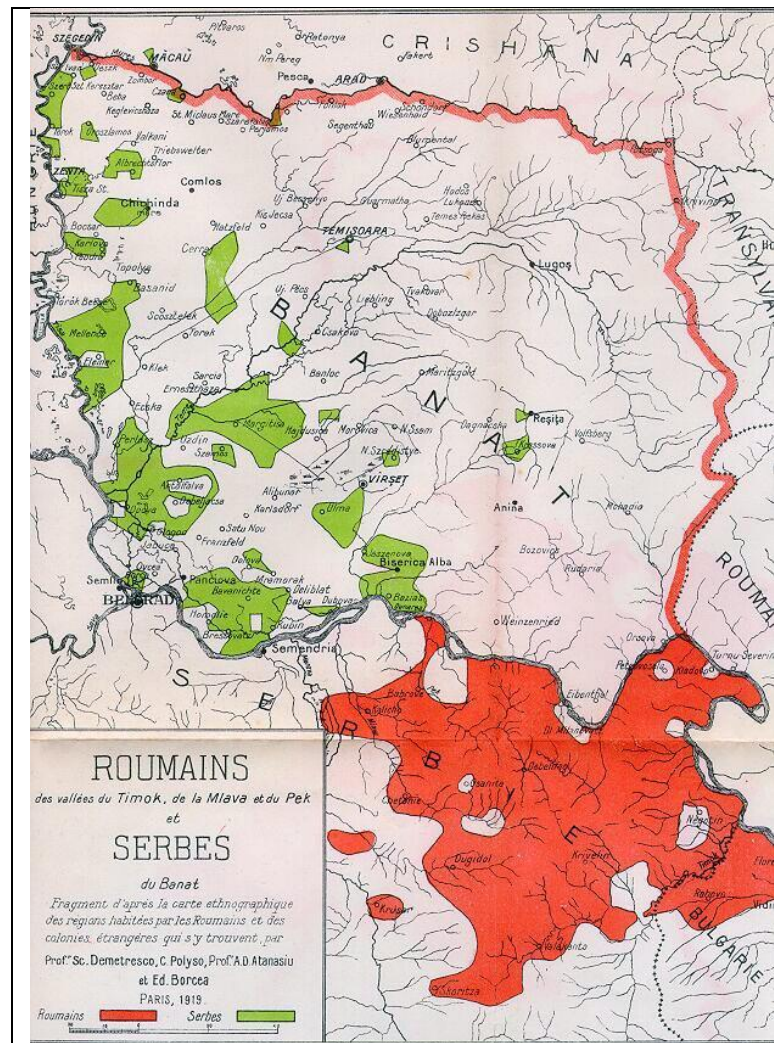
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Banat 1882

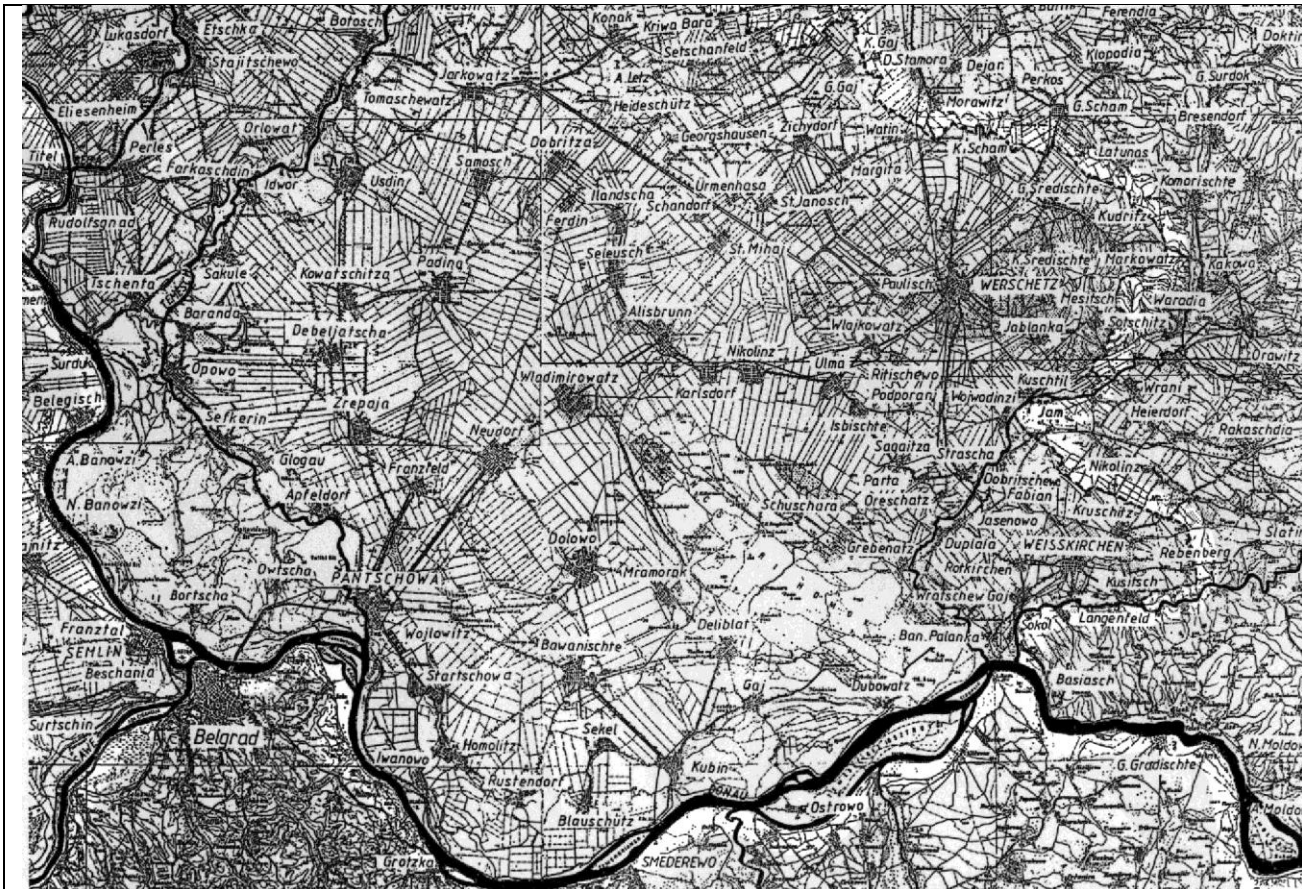
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Banat 1919

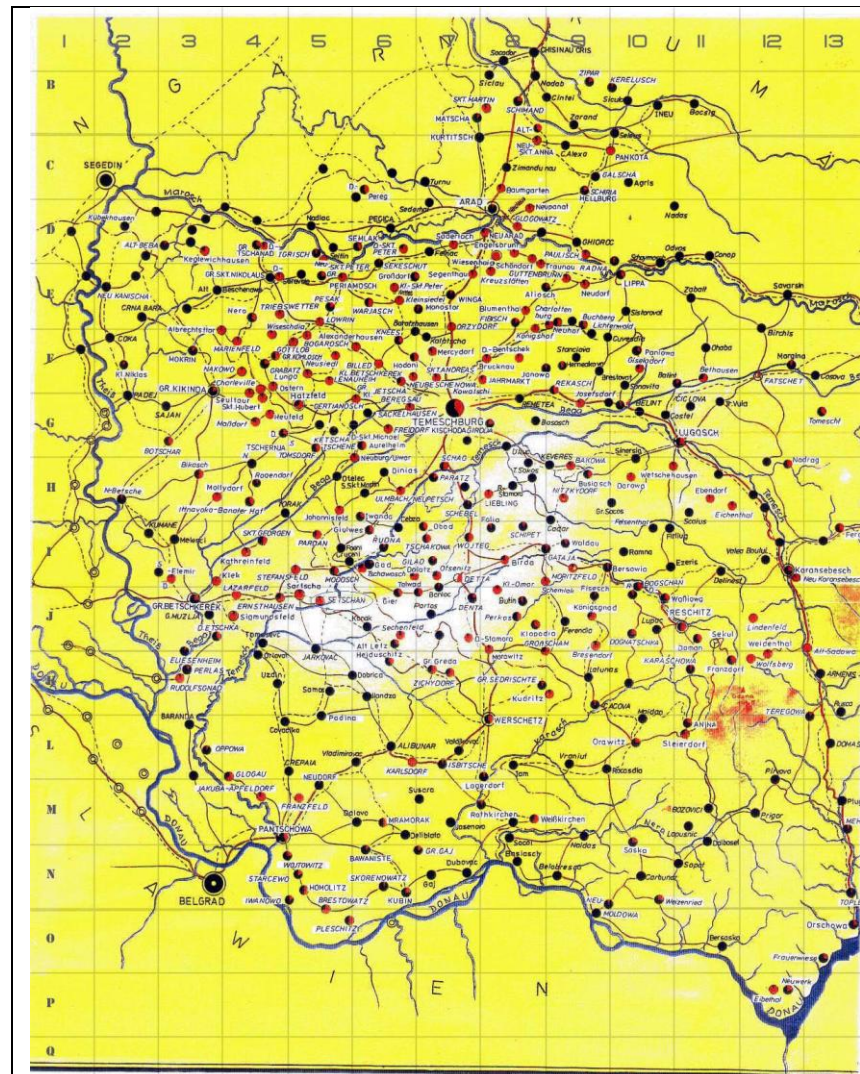
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Banat 1942

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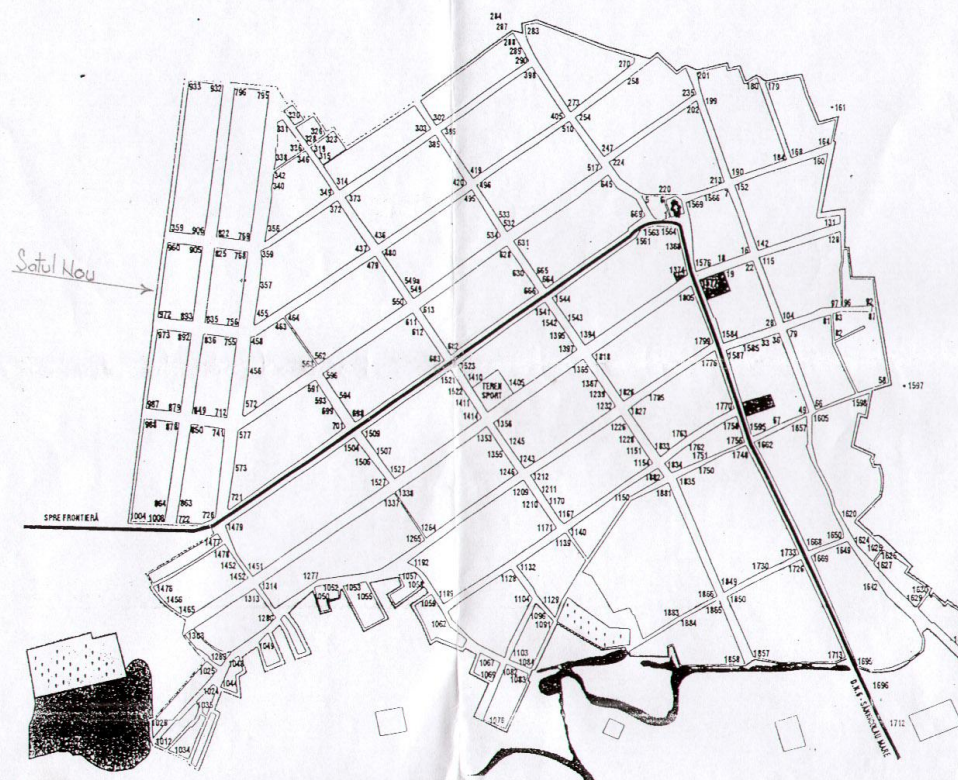
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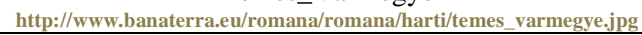
Cenad 2006

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Mehedinti 2006

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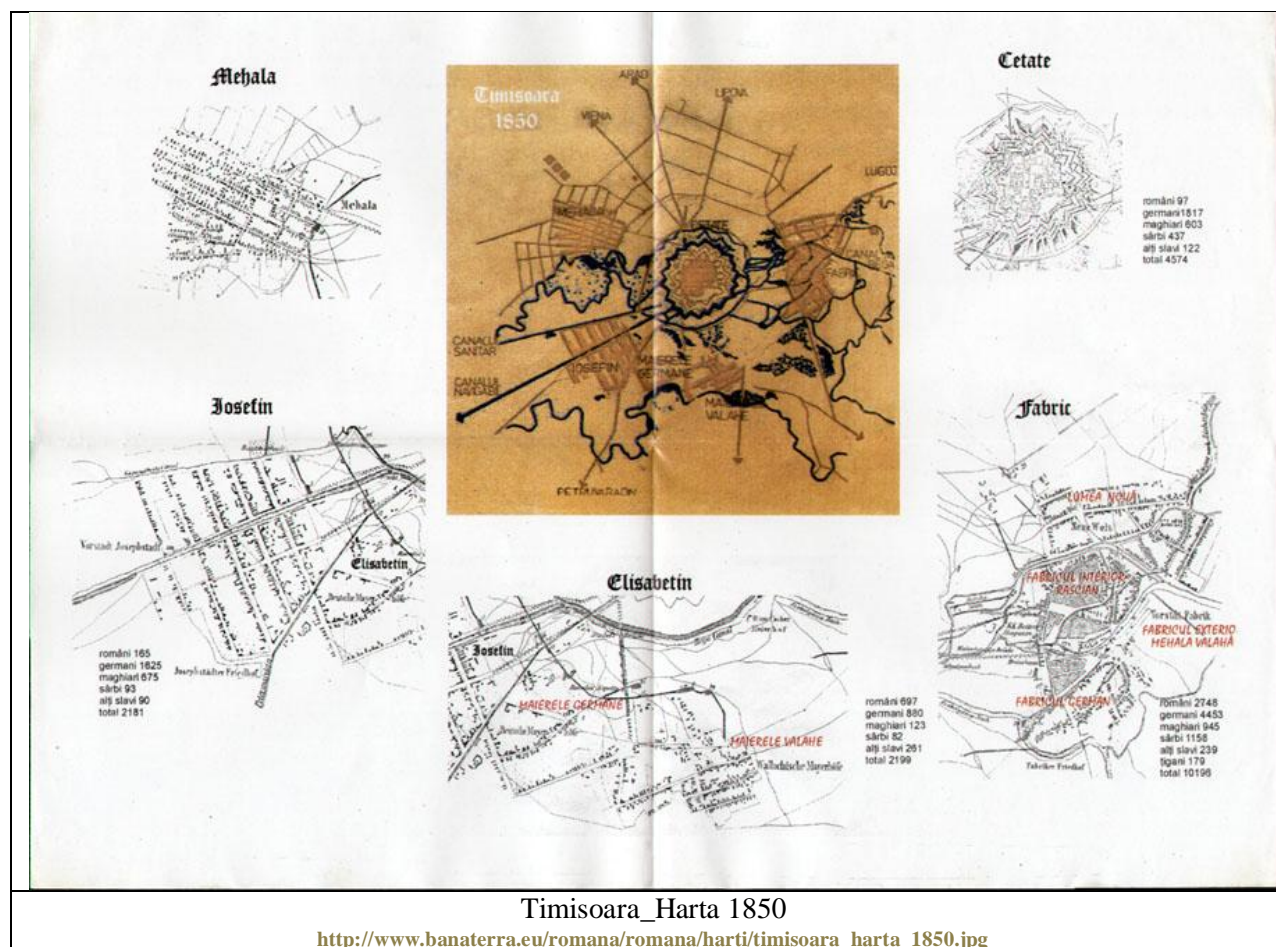




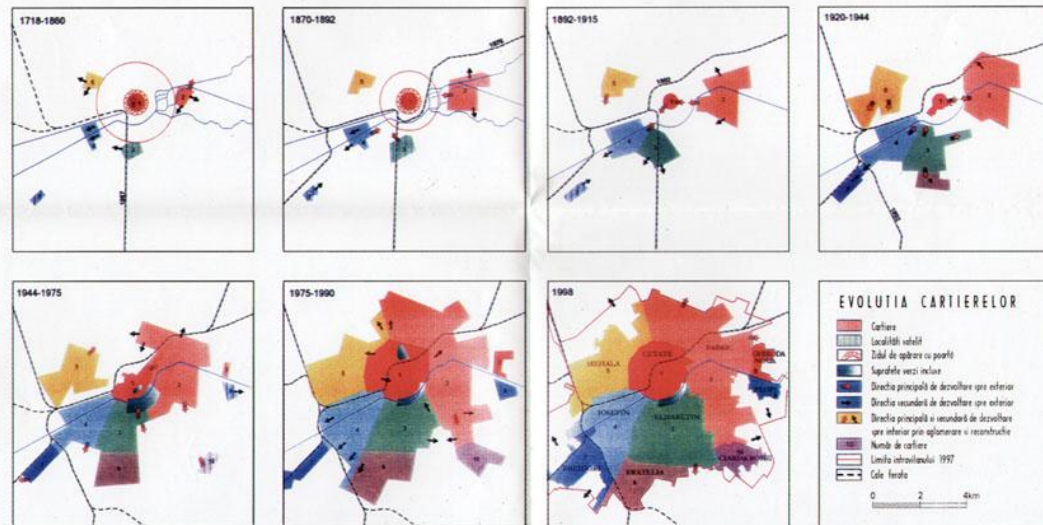
Timis 1913

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Evoluția în timp a orașului



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