

THE CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS ON FELEACU HILL

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ABSTRACT. – **The Classification of Rural Settlements on Feleacu Hill.** Feleacu Hill has been inhabited since ancient times, as proved by archaeological findings. Nowadays, due to the favourable natural conditions, there are 17 rural settlements spread out from the top of the hill to the lower parts. The paper presents the classification and typology of these villages. According to the demographic size, most of the settlements are small and medium-sized, less than 1500 inhabitants. Structurally, there are some concentrated villages, but the majority of the villages have a scattered structure, as the houses are separated by small lands, orchards or gardens. The texture of the villages is irregular, as they inherit the medieval network of streets. The economic functions are complex. However, most rural settlements have primarily agricultural functions, but those closer to Cluj-Napoca have mixed functions because they tend to become dormitory villages for people working in Cluj-Napoca.

Keywords: *Feleacu Hill, population census, linear village, scattered village, dispersed village, concentrated village, texture, structure, dormitory village.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, rural settlements are still part of the Romanian society, and by analyzing them, important and useful information can be provided, for a better understanding of our traditions, values and of our society's way of living. By studying their past and present existence, one can provide predictions for the preservation and future development of the villages on Feleacu Hill (P. Idu, 1969). The presence of rural settlements in this area is the result of a sum of combined factors that were favorable to their location and wealth, such as: water supply, soil and subsoil resources, the existence of two important nearby cities: Cluj-Napoca and Turda, and, of course, the presence of roads, which cross the area and provide means of transportation for all the rural population living in these villages. But even if the conditions mentioned above are optimal, there still are differences in development between the villages on Feleacu Hill, as it will be shown below.

2. THE CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC SIZE

The demographic size of a settlement is the mixed result of the natural conditions of the analyzed territory and the socio-economic potential of the population (Gr. P. Pop, 2012). In time, the number of inhabitants has many ups and downs in these rural

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settlements, as it can be seen in the official data that is provided by the population censuses (I. Bolovan, 2000). So, in 1850, according to the population census, all the rural settlements on Feleacu Hill were included in the category of small villages (Ciurila, Pruniș, Sălicea, Săliște, Tăuți, Ceanu Mic, Comșești, Mărtinești) and medium villages (Aiton, Rediu, Feleacu, Gheorghieni, Vâlcele, Tureni, Micești). The same classification is preserved in 1857, but in 1869, one should mention the existence of the first village with more than 1500 inhabitants, Aiton (1550 people). As the population continued to increase, there were three villages in 1890, which were classified in the category of large villages, over 1500 people: Aiton, Feleacu and Gheorghieni. At the next population census, in 1900, one more village, Rediu (1525 inhabitants), joined the category of the above mentioned large villages. Following the same trend, some of the villages enlisted in the first census in the category of small villages, enlarged their population, and thus they were classified in the category of medium villages, having more than 500 inhabitants, such as: Ciurila, Sălicea, Ceanu Mic and Comșești.

The dynamics of the population in the villages on Feleacu Hill by censuses

Table 1

Villages / Year	1850	1857	1869	1880	1890	1900	1910	1930	1941	1956	1966	1977	1992	2002
Aiton	1301	1453	1550	1657	2018	2003	2184	2289	2413	2173	1890	1453	831	727
Rediu	1137	1124	1194	1146	1434	1525	1750	1843	2172	1581	1418	1319	795	611
Ciurila	435	448	478	506	533	579	621	612	629	605	487	354	233	236
Pruniș	211	164	235	249	254	300	334	357	399	397	302	227	147	139
Sălicea	379	370	483	500	539	578	569	735	734	706	567	485	326	283
Săliște	335	341	388	343	265	356	414	430	463	451	383	310	150	118
Feleacu	1272	1288	1439	1460	1719	2033	2231	2343	2437	2258	2317	2520	1849	1709
Casele Micești										73	68	34	0	11
Gheorghieni	1174	1181	1353	1340	1582	1680	2087	1871	1767	1749	1638	1701	1226	1077
Sărădiș										275	217	205	102	75
Vâlcele	875	867	959	972	1122	1161	1286	1447	1495	1432	1309	1423	939	938
Tăuți	226	236	292	281	339	367	429	510	612	497	378	336	197	214
Tureni	1016	992	1083	1045	1099	1134	1240	1450	1566	1408	1386	1363	1022	1027
Ceanu Mic	469	544	615	699	875	943	917	1020	984	859	816	734	546	519
Comșești	487	452	497	480	584	596	653	588	543	503	412	345	236	240
Mărtinești	202	190	166	175	228	226	256	367	466	539	579	563	371	383
Micești	986	988	1034	1068	1215	1214	1350	1468	1522	1423	1229	904	560	416

In 1941, the population census recorded the largest number of inhabitants for ten of the analyzed villages, and afterwards, the population was gradually declining, and this phenomenon was recorded for all the villages on Feleacu Hill. So, in 1941, there were six large villages: Aiton, Rediu, Feleacu (more than 2000 inhabitants), Gheorghieni, Tureni and Micești; six medium villages: Vâlcele (1495 inhabitants), Ciurila, Sălicea, Tăuți, Ceanu Mic and Comșești (543 inhabitants); and only three villages were in the category of small villages, under 500 inhabitants, Pruniș (399 inhabitants), Săliște and Mărtinești. At the population census in 1956, two new villages were recorded: Sărădiș, a small village (275 inhabitants, separated from Rediu), and Casele Micești, a very small village, having less than 100 people (73 inhabitants, separated from Micești).

Formally, these small villages were hamlets which already had a declining population when they were classified as villages.

In 1966, just three villages remained in the category of large villages with more than 1500 inhabitants: Aiton, Feleacu and Gheorghieni, and in 1977 the number of large villages dropped to only two: Feleacu (2520 inhabitants) and Gheorghieni (1701 inhabitants). At the population census in 1992 only Feleacu was classified as a large village, 1849 people being recorded at that time, and going from one extreme to another, in the village Casele Micești, there was no recorded population at all, as there was no permanent resident living in the village at that time.

According to the population census in 2002, the rural settlements on Feleacu Hill were classified as follows:

- very small sized villages, with less than 100 inhabitants: Casele Micești (11 inhabitants), Sărădiș (75 inhabitants).
- small sized villages, with a population between 100-500 inhabitants: Săliște (118 inhabitants), Pruniș (139 inhabitants), Tăuți (214 inhabitants), Ciurila (236 inhabitants), Comșești (240 inhabitants), Sălicea (283 inhabitants), Mărtinești (383 inhabitants) and Micești (416 inhabitants).
- medium sized villages, with a population between 500 and 1500 inhabitants: Ceanu Mic (519 inhabitants), Reditu (611 inhabitants), Aiton (727 inhabitants), Vâlcele (938 inhabitants), Tureni (1027 inhabitants), Gheorghieni (1077 inhabitants).
- large villages, with more than 1500 inhabitants: Feleacu (1709 inhabitants).

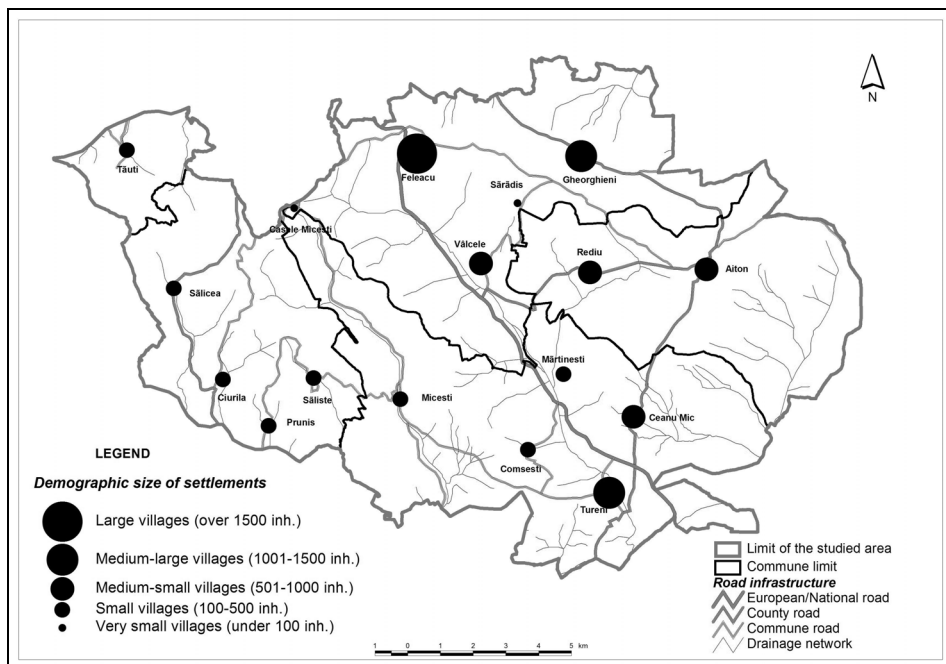


Fig. 1. The demographic size of settlements on Feleacu Hill in 2002

3. THE CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR SHAPE, STRUCTURE AND TEXTURE OF THE BUILT-UP AREA

Taking into consideration the *shape of the villages*, all the settlements on Feleacu Hill have a non-geometrical or irregular shape of the built-up area, due to their ancient existence and permanent adaptation of the villages to the geomorphology of the terrain.

The *structure* of a village indicates the degree of concentration of the dwellings in the built-up area (V. Surd, 2003). Generally speaking, there are three major types of villages that are considered in Romania, according to the position of the dwellings in the built-up area of a village: the concentrated village type, the scattered village type and the dispersed isolated type (V. Mihăilescu, 1927; Alina-Gabriela Mureşan, 2008).

The concentrated village type is not characteristic for Feleacu Hill. Still, a concentration of the dwellings can be seen in the villages Ceanu Mic and Sălicea (especially in the new built-up area, where large houses are predominant), and in the centre of some of the settlements, in particular in the villages that hold the administrative position of commune seat (Feleacu, Tureni, Ciurila, Aiton).

On Feleacu Hill, most of the rural settlements have a scattered structure of the dwellings, as the houses are separated by small cultivated lands, orchards and gardens and the houses are aligned along the main means of transport (Al. Savu, 1987). Such is the case for Vâlcele, Pruniş, Sălişte, Tăuţi, Comşeşti and Rediu.

A peculiar case of scattered village is *the linear village*, which is formed along a transport route, such as a road, or a river. That is the case of Mărtineşti, located at the contact between the hills and Racilor River flood plain. Some tendencies of linearity were also found in the case of the villages Tăuţi and Sălicea, which developed some tentacle ramifications along some of the main stream tributaries or along secondary roads.

There is also the case of a *dual linearity*, when the dwellings are mainly located around two parallel roads, such being the case for Ciurila and Gheorgheni villages.

Another peculiarity of the settlements on Feleacu Hill is the presence and development of a secondary built-up area of a village, along the main road, at some distance from the ancient built-up area. This is the case for the villages Tureni and Vâlcele, which recently developed along the national and European E60 road, and along the way that connects the old core of the village with this new built-up areas.

A dispersed structure, with dwellings separated between them by large fields, or even forest, can be found in the small sized villages: Casele Miceşti and Sărădiş. In the case of the village Casele Miceşti, there are two separate and distinct cores, made up by only a few houses, and separated between them by a forest. At Sărădiş, the dispersion of the houses is more obvious on the top of Feleacu Hill.

The *texture* of the villages (the manner in which the road network is arranged) does not have a geometrical regularity, because most of the settlements inherited the structure of the roads from medieval times, so nowadays there is a very complex and irregular texture in these villages.

4. THE CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS

In general, a classification of rural settlements according to their economic functions is mainly established by taking into consideration the active population (J. Benedek, 2000). This is because only the job of an individual is recorded at the population census,

without providing the respective location. So, in the end the results may not be very accurate for the studied unit.

The rural settlements on Feleacu Hill may be classified as follows:

- Rural settlements with agricultural functions, where the majority of the population is active in the primary economic sector (agriculture, fishing, forestry): Săliște, Mărtinești, Rediu, Casele Micești, Comșești, Pruniș, Sărădiș, Micești, Ceanu Mic.
- Rural settlements with agriculture and service functions: mainly the settlements located along E60 road between Cluj-Napoca and Turda, and the commune seats: Tureni, Vâlcele, Aiton, Ciurila.
- Rural settlements with agricultural and residential functions (the tendency is to become dormitory villages): Gheorghieni, Tăuți and Sălicea, in which most of the active population goes to work to Cluj-Napoca.
- Rural settlements with mixed functions – agriculture, service and residential functions of the active population: Feleacu, the most typical dormitory village on Feleacu Hill.

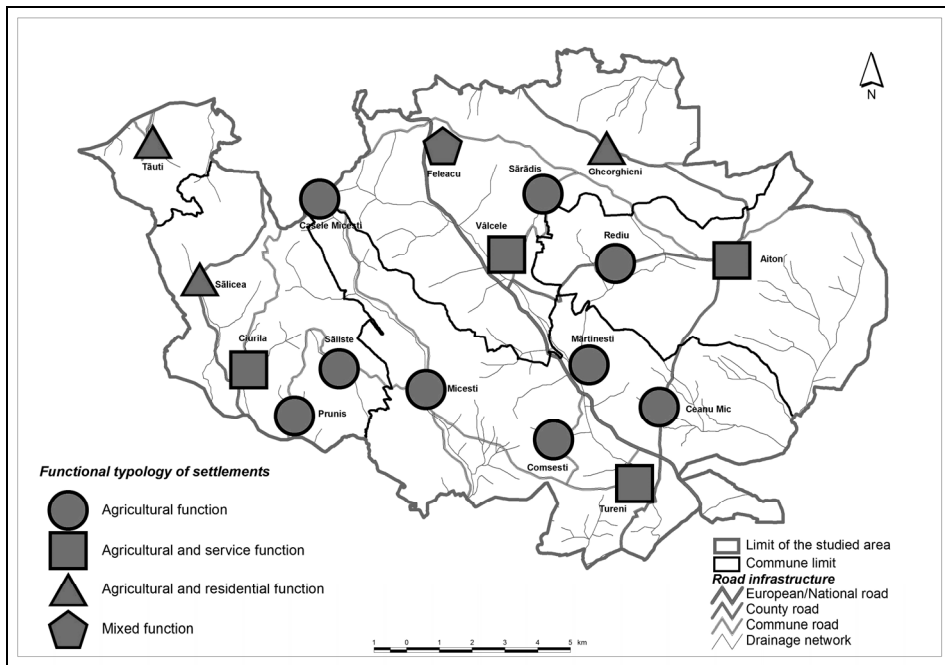


Fig. 2. The functional typology of settlements on Feleacu Hill

5. CONCLUSIONS

On Feleacu Hill, the environment offers good living conditions, so there is a high degree of humanization in the analysed unit. Because of the reduced slopes, high resources in water supply, gentle climate and forest vegetation, the rural settlements have a long

historical background (T. Nicoară, 2001) and developed from the top of the hill (Feleacu, Casele Micești, Sărădiș, Sălicea, Gheorghieni), along its permanent streams (Vâlcele, Reditu, Mărtinești, Tureni, Tăuți, Săliște, Micești) until the bottom of the hill, at the border with other geographical units, such as the Transylvanian Plain (Aiton, Ceanu Mic) and Iara-Hășdate Depression (Ciurila, Pruniș).

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