

The Banatian Military Border: Aspects of the Influence Exerted by Military Status on Space and Society¹

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Introduction

MILITARIZED BORDER strips, marked by repeated armed conflicts, generally exhibit spatial, socio-economic and communication structures that are different from those in civilian areas that are unaffected by intense militarization. These structures and configurations also determine the mentality of the population from militarized frontiers. Therefore, the perceptions and experiences of a society under permanent military alert and in constant military service differ, in terms of intensity and persistence, from those of communities that are faced with severe armed conflicts only sporadically and for short periods of time.

Such a spatial and functional unit, fully marked by repeated and lasting conflicts, was the Austrian Military Border, whose collective and individual perception as a unitary space of action and institutional identification was the result of its special status and of various war experiences. The many conflicting experiences in which the frontier society was engaged primarily included those of an immediate and obvious nature, as an actor directly involved in acts of war and armed border clashes; they also comprised an indirect type of experience—in which the frontier society acted as the subject of political decisions, of governmental civilizing and disciplinary measures targeting both the territory and the population. From an overall perspective, the presence of military forces in the area circumscribed by the Austrian Military Border led to considerable changes in its administrative, economic, social and family structures.

As a cultural landscape,² the Military Border was the materialized expression of various interdependent action groups and their manifestations towards the satisfaction of vital needs³ integrated in the natural environment. These relations between social groups⁴ and the environment are reflected in their ways of life, which are fully marked by regional and cultural specificities, and manifest themselves in economic practices, in customs and traditions, in religion and in all aspects of life. The functional categories of existence merge into a rapport of close interdependence, of exchange and influence with their natural environment. This gives way to an anthropic landscape, a cultural land-

scape as the manifestation—in the territory—of the functional structures characteristic of a society from a particular region.

This paper aims at highlighting the peculiar aspects of the cultural landscape from the Austrian Military Border, addressing certain spatial and socio-economic elements determined by the relation between the action and attitude groups and their environment, in the process of meeting vital needs against the background of intense militarization.

Colonization and the system of settlements

THE AUSTRIAN Military Border was a region that stretched for 1,800 km along the eastern and southeastern border between the Austrian and the Ottoman Empires. This was the result of the process of power expansion and stabilization which occurred throughout the 16th–18th centuries. Given the demographic and social instability in the newly conquered peripheral areas, the presence of the Ottoman threat and its own efforts of expansion in the Balkans, the Habsburg Empire was forced to protect its new borders. To ensure the Austrian supremacy at the border with the Ottoman Empire, mobile corps troops were deployed in a territory removed from the Hungarian Kingdom and placed under the direct jurisdiction of the Aulic War Council in Vienna. The Council from Vienna developed a plan for populating the new province, which combined land ownership with military commitment. In peacetime, the border guards' primary function was to ensure the security of the frontier and prevent the spread of epidemics, while in times of war, they were mobilized and engaged in the armed conflicts waged by the Habsburg Empire, not only in the south-eastern part of the Empire, but on all the battlefronts across Europe. From the middle of the 18th century on, the Banatian Military Border was an extension of this defensive belt, which was maintained until 1881.

The establishment, territorial expansion and later development of the Austrian Military Border were accompanied by repeated dislocations and by remarkable growth of the population in the area. Colonizations were necessary for strategic and political reasons, for the expansion of the Empire, but they also had an impact on the replenishment and repopulation of the Banat, which had been economically and demographically depleted by the Austrian-Turkish wars. During the development stage of the Military Border institution, colonization and the demographic policy were thus the basic components of land planning and management practices. The systematic colonization of the Military Border was aimed at stabilizing the population and monitoring the flow of refugees from the Ottoman area, as well as at establishing and installing new groups of inhabitants in settlements that had been planned according to military, economic, social and ethnic-religious requirements.

The intense and repeated mass migrations which, beginning with the 17th century and especially after the Peace of Karlowitz (Serbian: Sremski Karlovci, Romanian: Carloviț) (1699) and Passarowitz (Serbian: Požarevac) (1718), included the Banat, were triggered by a significant change in the political power relations between the neighboring powers, namely Austria and Turkey. The demographic evolution in the region was marked, however, by the high spatial mobility that had accompanied the expansion of the Ottoman

Empire ever since the beginning of the 15th century, when it had advanced up to the Danube.

Located at the intersection of two migration paths—one from the south to the north and the other one from the west to the east—the Austrian Military Border was an important place of refuge and settlement until the second half of the 19th century. The migration caused by the wars and initially occurring in both directions became, after the Napoleonic Wars (1815), decisively influenced by the economic and social attractiveness of the Austrian territory.

The situation of the newly acquired lands was a key element of the Habsburg development policy in the middle of the 18th century. The intention was for the devastated and depopulated territories—repeatedly laid to waste after prolonged armed conflicts or as a result of epidemics—to become lucrative and profitable. The territory could be stabilized and valorized only if it was inhabited. Thus, when the Austrian Military Border was established and expanded, the central government in Vienna adopted a policy of actively populating the area, based on the guiding principles of mercantilism and the contemporary populationist policy.⁵

The systematic colonization of the Banat and its related Military Border took place mainly in three large waves: the Carolinian Colonization, between 1718 and 1740, followed by the Thegesan Colonization (1744–1772) and, finally, by the Josephine Colonization, between 1782 and 1787. These actions entailed the displacement of several hundred thousand people from the Roman-German Empire and their installation in the south-eastern provinces.

The movements of population groups significantly changed the ethnic and religious structure of the border region. A multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society developed, which was nonetheless segregated into mono-ethnic settlements and families. Changes in the ethnic constitution affected not only the formal development of the territory and settlements but also the group relations therein. The spatial segregation of ethnic and religious groups was a conflict-avoidance strategy whereby, the Habsburg rule attempted to reduce the possibilities of conflict so that there would be no local clashes. The immanent enemy threats at the borders made it essential for the community to be united and not to allow state security to be endangered by any divisions or tensions among the population.

The large post-Ottoman migratory movements and colonization also determined profound changes in the system and structure of the settlements from the Military Frontier in the Modern Era. Colonization, the construction of settlements and the introduction of an innovative economic system in the territories newly acquired by the Austrian Empire induced a radical modification of the anthropic landscape. In this complex process, the planning carried out by the military government comprised all levels: both the shaping of the built environment and the life and economic activity of the population.⁶ The main idea of enlightened absolutism as regards the systematization of these spatial and social contexts underlay the activity of territorial planning and colonization. Organized settlement under lucrative and profitable conditions was to contribute to securing the border and introducing efficient agricultural practices as the basis for the economic development of the region. In accordance with these goals, what was envisaged was the

adaptation of a uniform economic and housing system; these measures were also designed to stabilize public order. As elements of the civilizing project, these measures envisioned a decent living standard for the population in question and the improvement of economic performances in the province.⁷

In the newly acquired provinces the dominant policy had aimed, to develop and maintain the political and military power, as well as to foster economic progress. The reform and the reorganization of the Military Border institution that began in the mid-18th century called for the planned and concentrated colonization of the territory in order to ensure a modern and efficient agricultural production. The changing of the borders, the restriction, redistribution or expansion of the localities, and the reparceling of farm land led to modifications in the appearance of the space and landscape.

The regularization and reorganization of the settlements from the Military Border occurred in a uniform manner, in accordance with the principles of security, military and economic supremacy of enlightened absolutism. The colonization organized in the Banatian Section of the Military Border led to the appearance of newly founded settlements with planned geometric shapes, as well as to the regulation and reorganization of the existing settlements. The territory of the German-Banatian Regiment was affected mostly by the founding of new settlements, planned to the smallest of details. Both military and security aspects were taken into account, as well as aspects that ensured proper economic functioning (the good soil quality, the water sources, and the relatively small distances to the farm land). The territory of the Wallachian-Illyrian Regiment was subjected mostly to processes of regularizing the existing settlements and relocating the villages scattered in compact settlements, positioned along the main routes of communication. Following this activity, within a century, many localities were completely restructured, adopting a radically changed appearance, most of them acquiring regular geometric shapes. The new regulatory measures, however, brought about a complex transformation that affected not only the shape, territorial location, structure or size, but also the economic function of the frontier settlements.⁸

Society

THE SYSTEMATIC colonization of the Austrian Military Border territory generated a unique ethnic, religious and cultural blend, admixing different population groups.⁹ Under such circumstances, for the Austrian Military Border, the formation and cultivation of a unitary frontier guard identity were at least as important with a view to achieving the desired objectives—securing economic autonomy and efficient permanent defense—as territorial organization and landscaping were.

In assisting with the border identity formation, the administration relied on highlighting its privileged position compared to the status of the civilian population from the Banat and the rest of the territory under Hungarian jurisdiction, included in feudal structures. The population from the Military Border was not in a position of feudal subjects, like the residents from the adjacent civilian area, since the border guards were free tenants. They were the direct subjects of the Sovereign and were subordinated to the

military hierarchy. Although this status gave them some freedom—as opposed to the non-military civil neighboring regions—they were under the permanent obligation to carry out military service. The entire family of the border guards and the village community itself were in a contractual relationship with the military superior, based on the military and economic power of the household community (“Hauskommunion”).¹⁰

The spatial and political-administrative dichotomy of the “Border-Province” type overlapped with the “soldier-peasant serf” opposition, which was a marker of status and identity. These categories were supplemented by the attributes “civil-military” and “free-subject,”¹¹ which constituted the basic pillars of identity and generated attitudes of inclusion or exclusion.

Depending on the origins of the population, three main groups were outlined on the Military Border, marked by different contexts and knowledge or experience backgrounds: the colonized veterans, the subjects coming from the Roman-German Empire, the autochthonous population and the Serbian and Wallachian immigrants from the neighboring provinces. Starting from these different premises, the Military Border administration strove to create “free peasant soldiers” who would assume and constantly cultivate this identity as border guards. The special attention given to people from the border region, their social disciplining and the construction of their identity as “free peasants and soldiers” entailed the changing of some of the habits and rules prevalent among the local and new-coming communities, as well as the shaping of new common values. This process resulted in a series of measures in the field of territorial planning and organization, as well as in economic, military, social, educational and confessional initiatives, which institutionalized the civilizational aspirations of the enlightened absolutist government. The main instrument of the institutionalization process was the Military Border legislation, which regulated not only the military affairs, but also contained provisions relating to the organization of all aspects pertaining to the social and economic life of the frontier population.

The absolutist state envisaged the centralization, rationalization, secularization and disciplining of the territory under its jurisdiction.¹² Throughout the empire the aim was the general improvement of the social conditions for the majority of the subjects. In the newly acquired territories and among the populations of these regions at the southeastern outskirts of the Empire what was intended, first, was the establishment of an administrative system that would facilitate a firm organization and that would integrate the new provinces in the imperial system. Because of the wars, the areas that had previously been under Ottoman rule now lacked both human resources and administrative and legal structures. Finding solutions to the social problems thus constituted one of the basic aims of the Habsburg development policy. The introduction of a functional administration sought, on the one hand, to establish the basis that the Viennese court needed for instituting the new order; on the other hand, by maintaining peace, order and by ensuring stability, the population was to be convinced of the advantages of a power change and of strengthening the border according to the new rules.

The disciplinary and civilizing measures were meant to educate the border guards in a monarchical spirit and turn them into adherents of the paternalistic mode of government. In order to win unconditional loyalty, prestige, recognition and influence, to

increase military and economic efficiency and, especially, to foster the political and moral cohesion of the frontier communities, the governance relied on the principle of paternalism and the concern for the soldier peasants or craftsmen and their families. The frontier society, organized in military structures, was characterized by discipline, responsibility, obligations and constraints, manifested through a special identity and way of life. Following militarization, the population became inured to the way of thinking and reasoning characteristic of the military institution¹³ and the evolution of the population on the Military Border followed a different path from that of the population under civil administration.

This governance structure did not, however, exclude social conflicts. The activity of territorial organization and landscaping conducted by the absolutist state and the means employed to maintain security and stabilize the economy in the targeted provinces was repeatedly faced with the opposition of the autochthonous and the new-coming populations. The state order and the civilizing intentions that were imposed in line with the objectives of the military government did not fully reflect the ideas and expectations of the frontier population. The discontent caused by the intervention of foreign domination in the traditional way of life fuelled the population's opposition. In the history of the Military Border, there were numerous examples of violent conflicts between the border guard population and the local military commanders. In the case of these conflicts, loyalty to the imperial family and inclusion under the Habsburg imperial jurisdiction were never put into question: at stake was rather the fight against the abuses of power committed by the regional and local administrative bodies.

Certain socio-cultural characteristics of various population groups, which were not taken into consideration by the central decision-making bodies in the reorganizing and replanning process, led to violent clashes with the local and regional government representatives, as well as with the foreign colonists. "Brigandage," a practice that was deeply rooted in the social tradition of the rural Romanian and Serbian communities, became one of the most widespread forms of protest. A phenomenon that was inherent in the border area, "brigandage" was part of the inter-social and cross-border conflict potential that was characteristic of the Military Border, resulting from the interaction between certain spatial settlement patterns and the economic, social, ethnic and political structures.

The frontier guard population was not just the object of state organization measures, but also played an active role in these processes. It was, on one hand, subjected to the experiment undertaken by the government towards forming a specific profile, and on the other hand, it actually participated in the implementation of this formation process. The attempt made by the central government to direct or even amplify the existing cultural models without taking into account the internal functioning rules was not always successful. Imposing or opting for some forms of life was determined not only by the governmental goals but also by socio-cultural factors. In introducing the communitarian system of cohabitation and husbandry among the veterans and the colonists in the Roman-German Empire, for example, the central decision-making bodies had not anticipated that the foundations of the Serbian communities were actually family relations and the kinship among their members. Therefore, the imposition by ordinance of habitation, working and ownership communities through the grouping of several

colonist nuclear families failed repeatedly, because they should have been the result of the process of natural formation and growth.

Moreover, the initial aversion to work of the ex-servicemen who were colonized and integrated into the German-Banatian Border Regiment may be explained through the failure to confirm the veterans' expectations from the onset of colonization, in the sense that they would lead an easy, carefree life, which would not involve too much effort.¹⁴ Similarly, the displacement and forced relocation of settlements along the main arteries of traffic and communication, accompanied by radical changes in ordinary life and economy, outraged the local population.

As the outcome and the expression of the power inherent in state policy, the area of the border with the Ottoman Empire demarcated a vast territory with cultural, economic and ethnic-religious connections. For this reason, the boundary established and drawn by the warring foreign powers in the wake of war treaties was only partially accepted and respected by the local population on both sides of the newly imposed border. Therefore, despite all the measures of control and regulation of the cross-border traffic, the frontier was not as tight as the supreme authorities had intended. Many forms of local traffic defied the attempts made by the administration to fully monitor and control transboundary movement.

This society, which was built on strong kinship relations and was widespread in South-Eastern Europe, explains the strong connection between the Austrian and the Turkish subjects of Serbian origin. Their loyalty was based on this close relationship, manifesting, for example, through the cross-border support granted to the "brigands" or the Serbian fighters for freedom in the Ottoman Empire in the early 19th century. This may also explain the ongoing communication community of the "Sastanak" type in the cross-border zone. This form of socialization was prevalent among the Austrian and Turkish subjects of Serbian origin. It manifested itself especially through meetings between relatives or members of the community from the village of origin, who had been separated by the repeatedly shifting borders or the migratory movements that had occurred at their own initiative or that had been imposed upon them. These meetings were maintained under the circumstances of a more severe border surveillance, by adapting to the new circumstances.

The endeavor of the absolutist state to monitor and organize all the areas in the life of the population reached its limits: the traditional precepts and laws that were deeply engrained in the way of life of the population, on the one hand, and the political situation of the border, on the other hand, were impediments to the comprehensive enforcement of the absolutist policy principles. Although it had notable successes, the absolutist state also incurred, in the 18th century, numerous defeats in the effective organization of the Military Border society, on account of limited resources and organizational or legal instruments, as well as because of the lack of broad public support. At its south-eastern periphery, the Habsburg Empire depended on the loyalty and the military force of the large Romanian and Serbian populations. In order not to jeopardize the loyalty of the population and to count on the combat force of the Romanians and the Serbs in their own interest, the relations the higher authority developed with them were marked by an attitude that exuded power, authority and commitment, but that occasionally also

imparted monarchical benevolence or charity.¹⁵ Because of this attitude and the special status of the Military Border, different cultural norms were maintained compared with other administrative units in the Habsburg Empire, where their enforcement would not have been possible.

The Austrian Military Border was a place of experimentation, in which the social system determined by specific factors enabled the conduct of a particular way of life. The population from the border region was, on the whole, a society with a different lifestyle from the adjacent areas, but it allowed the manifestation of differences between neighboring groups, linked by spatial relations, within its framework.

The emergence of political and identitarian ideas of nation and nationality after 1830 dispelled the homogeneity of the Military Border identification region, as constructed by the authorities and influenced by the common war experience of the border guards. The trends also affected the militarized strip and the years 1848–1849 induced a change in the development direction followed theretofore, many border guards identifying themselves as members of a secular nation rather than as the military instruments of absolutist imperial power. Through its progressive aggregation in national-confessional communities, the militarized society was affected in its most profound depths.

However, the highly advanced stage in the process of frontier identity and unitary consciousness building was evident especially after the dissolution of the Military Border. Wolf notices that the particular lifestyle formed at the time of the Military Border was partially maintained until the 20th century, despite the abolition of this institution.¹⁶ After the disappearance of the reasons and circumstances that had demanded the establishment of the Military Border, the relevance of the behavior patterns and attitudes engrained in the consciousness of the former guards began to stand out very poignantly. Compared to the society from the non-militarized provinces, the former border guards were characterized by a highly developed identitarian consciousness and solidarity spirit, by a propensity towards action and sacrifice, by loyal behavior and rational economic activity, based on the skills they had acquired and on disciplined work. The lifestyle that had developed under the influence of the special construct of the “Military Border” persisted in some regions long after the abolition of the institution that had created it.

Communications and transport

BETWEEN THE 17th and 18th centuries, the border frontier was repeatedly the scene of major armed conflicts, at intervals of about 30 years. For all the military operations carried out in the south-eastern area of the Empire, both defensive and offensive, the Military Border represented the main advancement route as well as the battleground for the armed forces. Due to repeated and lengthy war experiences, the Austrian strategists and military theorists were aware of the geo-strategic importance of the south-eastern borders of the Empire. Previous successes were seen as models worth following, but above all, efforts were made to avoid the repetition of failures. If during peacetime, the roads and the streets had proved to be indispensable, during wartime, the existence, conditions and knowledge of the access routes became crucial.

Therefore the location and development of the communication channels located in the area of the south-eastern border of the Austrian Empire were important for the geo-strategic and military potential of the territory.

Even if its importance subsided in time, during the stage of establishing and expanding the Military Border, military considerations were of crucial importance for the development and planning of transport and communications. Repeated conflicting events had a decisive impact on the location, construction and maintenance of communication channels. Military needs in wartime circumstances demanded special conditions and mobility means, and these criteria were taken into account when roads were located and constructed. The alignment and orientation of roads, their consolidation and the entire construction activity took place against the backdrop of war experiences, as well as with a view to possible future conflicts. The development of the communication and transportation system was subjected to severe strategic exigencies, with special emphasis on the connections between the major military bases and the marching routes. Besides the military and strategic considerations, the economic aspects were also of significant importance.

Starting from the second half of the 18th century, when the consolidation of the Military Border also included the communication and transport infrastructure, the transit links were expanded and the communication routes between the Military Border sections and those with the surrounding areas were drawn up or were improved. To optimize the possibilities for transport, the road network was supplemented by a series of waterways. The provision of supplies to the soldiers, the transport of weaponry and supplies on navigable waterways proved to be cost-effective and efficient. Connecting roads to waterways for greater efficiency entailed complex works, such as the regularization of waterways, the construction of bridges and the building of jetties and fords. The extension of streets and waterways led to the development of a network of routes and main, commercial or mail roads, and the shore trails that included the Banatian Military Border in the transport and communication system of the Empire.

Although there were important successes, many projects and proposals for the improvement of the road and water traffic systems were partially abandoned from the very beginning either because the state did not have the material resources necessary for them, or because the concept of land planning was not well defined yet. Other works were interrupted, delayed or abandoned due to military conflicts or the lack of labor and human resources, the border guards carrying out military service or other strategic military obligations. The Austro-Turkish border situated on the Danube and the Sava—the most important waterways for both military and economic actions—was somewhat of an obstacle, because the Ottoman administration had no interest in improving navigability on the rivers and, hence, the regularization and landscaping works could be made only partially and had only a relative efficiency.

The transport infrastructure was approached by the political and military power in two ways: on the one hand, by supporting and facilitating its development, and on the other hand, by turning it into the object of significant restrictions, which targeted isolation from neighbors. To support its own expansion intentions and to reject the repeated offensive actions of the Ottoman Empire, Austria marked the border landscape of South-Eastern Europe by installing a defensive system and, simultaneously, by creating

points of contact with the neighboring country, with which its political relations were rather tense. This defensive system of the “limes” type, called the “Cordon,” was designed to ensure the safety of the Austrian provinces from the south-eastern periphery and, indirectly, of the entire Empire. The Guard Service along the “Cordon” was the main duty of the frontier troops. Their permanent tasks included securing the frontier against enemy attacks, protecting the country against the spread of epidemics from the neighboring territories, maintaining trade within the parameters of legality, preventing customs fraud and smuggling, precluding desertion, and illegal emigration.

The above aspects reveal the contradictory effect of the war on the transport and communication system. While on the one hand, the military needs promoted the expansion and maintenance of the transport system, on the other hand, in many cases, they took away the financial and human resources necessary for installing the communication and transport infrastructure. In addition, security considerations led to controls and limits on cross-border mobility and to a low number of link roads. This peripheral position also suggests that the development of the transport and communication system was, in general, poorer compared to the rest of the Empire.

In addition to developing the territorial structures of the communication and transport system, the existence of centralized empires, such as the Habsburg Empire, also depended fundamentally on the efficient operation of communication systems. It was therefore imperative that political and military goals should take precedence in the development of an optimally organized communication network.¹⁷ The road networks and the messaging systems that had been set up to transport people and goods, as well as for information transmission, were intended to ensure the exchange of information between the administrative units of the empire, to facilitate communication with the military command centers, to dispatch commands and instructions and, in general, to maintain communication, which, given the enlargement of the Empire, had become increasingly difficult.

Obtaining and transmitting information were of particular importance on the Military Border because of its location on the outer fringe of the Monarchy, in direct contact with the inimical Ottoman Empire, and also because it represented a gateway of access for the flow of goods and the possible epidemics coming from the southeast. The special importance of its position turned the Military Border into a decisive link in the Monarchy’s intelligence service. Regular reports on troop movements, the risk of epidemics and the flow of goods, as well as the establishment of contacts with trustworthy people from the Ottoman area were the border guard authorities’ main duties, which involved the construction of a reliable and effective communication system.

A similar development that was in line with other contemporary innovations involved the postal system, which nonetheless always depended on the prevailing political situation. Any territorial changes could affect the route network and lead either to changing or to abandoning and introducing alternative trajectories. The knowledge acquired during the wars and the repeated armed conflicts, the methods of making pathways and routes more efficient and the streamlining of communication and transport means were taken over and applied in peacetime too. Although the public system of postal communications from the Military Border experienced a tremendous development, the security criteria and the military aspects continued to be decisive on the periphery of the Empire.

Conclusions

THE AUSTRIAN Military Border was an attempt by the absolutist state to shape the landscape according to certain political, economical and social principles. . It involved a concerted approach to forming a clearly defined territorial, administrative and legal unit, with a well-delineated and united society, meeting the primary function of securing and defending the border against the enemy. During its 300 years of existence, the original function of the Military Border underwent a continuous adaptation to the political, diplomatic and socio-economic demands of the era. The maintenance of internal and external security, the sanitary belt and a constant contingent of soldiers supplemented the original functions of border protection and defense against the Turks. In addition to adapting itself to historical evolution and serving an increasing number of functions, the Military Border also saw the establishment of a complex administrative apparatus. During institutionalization, the Military Border was endowed with administrative offices and legislative bases, which were designed to regulate the organization of the territory and all the domains of the border guards' lives. Nonetheless, the everyday reality of the frontier society evinced phenomena that were inconsistent with the conduct demanded by the authorities.

The perception of the space delineated administratively and legislatively by the political decision-makers was mainly influenced by its primordial security function. The experience marked by repeated wars and armed conflicts had a conclusive impact on the organization and management of the Military Border. The influence of the frequent conflicting events induced changes in space and in the people's lives. By increasing the efficiency of the bureaucratic and military apparatus, the absolutist state sought more than ever to organize the space according to its own needs and to influence the lives of each and every one in particular.

The systematic action the state undertook in the sense of territorial organization and land management brought about irrevocable changes at the level of large-scale systems in the anthropic landscape, such as the structure of settlements and the system of communications and transport. Discontinuities are therefore detectable at both the social-institutional levels of the regional power holders and at the level of the spatial structures transformed according to governmental instructions. The level of everyday life, the quotidian lifestyle of the border guard population integrated into the spatial structures was characterized, however, by the more subtle or accurate maintenance of many traditions.



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Notes

1. Certain aspects rendered in the article represents elements from the doctoral thesis submitted by Havadi-Nagy Kinga Xenia, under the title *Die Slawonische und Banater Militärgrenze. Kriegserfahrungen und Mobilität* [*The Slavonian and Banatian Military Border. Wartime Experience and Spatial Mobility*] (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2010).
2. The notion of cultural landscape refers to the concept of “Kulturlandschaft” from German Social Geography. This concept defines a spatial-functional unit, an organized, humanized, functional space.
3. The way of life (“Lebensform”) is defined by the seven categories of vital necessities (“Grunddaseinsfunktionen”): work and production, habitation, travel, reproduction, supply, education, maintenance of social relationships, leisure, as the Social School of Munich has described them. See Benno Werlen, *Sozialgeographie: eine Einführung* (Bern-Stuttgart-Wien, 2000); Peter Weichhart, *Entwicklungslinien der Sozialgeographie. Von Hans Bobek bis Benno Werlen* (Stuttgart, 2008).
4. The notion of “social group” renders the concept of “soziale Gruppe” from German Social Geography, a group defined by a homogeneous behavior and mode of action, which engenders spatial structures. See Heinz Heineberg, *Einführung in die Anthropogeographie/Humangeographie* (Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich, 2003), 13-46.
5. Heppner, Harald, “Die Entwicklungspolitik der Habsburger in Südosteuropa infolge der Türkenkriege,” *Südostdeutsches Archiv*, XXVI-XXVII (1983-1984): 88-99.
6. Josef Wolf, “Zur Genese der historischen Kulturlandschaft Banat. Ansiedlung, Siedlungsgestaltung und Landschaftswandel im Banat vom frühen 18. bis Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts,” in Engel, Walter, ed., *Kulturraum Banat: deutsche Kultur in einer europäischen Vielvölkerregion* (Essen, 2007), 13-70.
7. Erik Roth, *Die planmäßig angelegten Siedlungen in Deutsch-Banater Militärgrenze 1765-1821* (München, 1988).
8. Josef Wolf, *Ethnische Struktur des Banats 1890-1992. Begleittext zum Atlas Ost-Südosteuropa. Aktuelle Karten zu Ökologie, Bevölkerung und Wirtschaft* (Wien: Österreichische Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut, 2004).
9. Christian Promitzer, “Grenzen und ethnische Identitäten. Eine theoretische Annäherung am Beispiel der Habsburgerischen Militärgrenze (18. und 19. Jh.),” in Drago Roksandic, ed., *Microhistory of the Triplex Confinium* (Budapest, 1997), 111-119.
10. The economic model of the Military Border was built on the household unit known as “Hauskommunion,” a traditional organizational structure among the Serbian population, which was originally built on kinship relations. This was based on the organization and conduct of domestic activities and on maintaining the economic autonomy of the community even in the absence of members who carried out their military and frontier duties.
11. Josef Wolf, “Deutsch-jüdische Kontakträume in den Ländern des ungarischen Krone vom 18. bis zum beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert,” in Hans Hecker, Walter Engel, eds., *Symbiose und Traditionsbruch. Deutsch-jüdische Wechselbeziehungen in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa (19. und 20. Jahrhundert)* (Düsseldorf, 2000), 201-298.
12. Heppner, Die Entwicklungspolitik, 88-99.
13. Ute Frevert, “Gesellschaft und Militär im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Sozial-, kultur und geschlechtergeschichtliche Annäherungen,” in Ute Frevert, *Militär und Gesellschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. [= Industrielle Welt. Schriftenreihe des Arbeitskreises für moderne Sozialgeschichte, 58] (Stuttgart, 1997), 7-17.
14. Roth, *Die planmäßig*.

15. Josef Wolf, "Ethnische Konflikte im Zuge der Besiedlung des Banats im 18. Jahrhundert. Zum Verhältnis von Einwanderung, staatlicher Raumorganisation und ethnostrukturellem Wandel," in Mathias Beer, Dittmar Dahlmann, eds., *Migration nach Ostund Südosteuropa vom 18. bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts. Ursachen-Formen-Verlauf-Ergebnis*. [= Schriftenreihe des IDGL] (Stuttgart, 1999), 337-366.
16. Wolf, *Ethnische Struktur*, 70-72.
17. Jürgen Wilke, *Grundzüge der Medien- und Kommunikationsgeschichte. Von den Anfängen bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, (Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2000).

Abstract

The Banatian Military Border: Aspects of the Influence Exerted by Military Status on Space and Society

This paper approaches aspects of the influence exerted by military status on the space and society of the Austrian Military Border in general and on the Banatian strip in particular. The study focuses on the impact of the special status of the Military Border on spatial mobility, the colonization of this area, the structure of adapted settlements, the transport and communication system, and it also presents the changes that occurred in this militarized society. The persistent presence of the military in the territory circumscribed by the Austrian Military Border induced remarkable changes in the administrative, economic, social, and family structures. The relations that the various action groups and power holders developed with the environment here created a peculiar cultural landscape in the process of satisfying vital needs against the background of intense militarization.

Keywords

Austrian Military Border, military status, spatial mobility, colonization, system of settlements, society, communications and transport