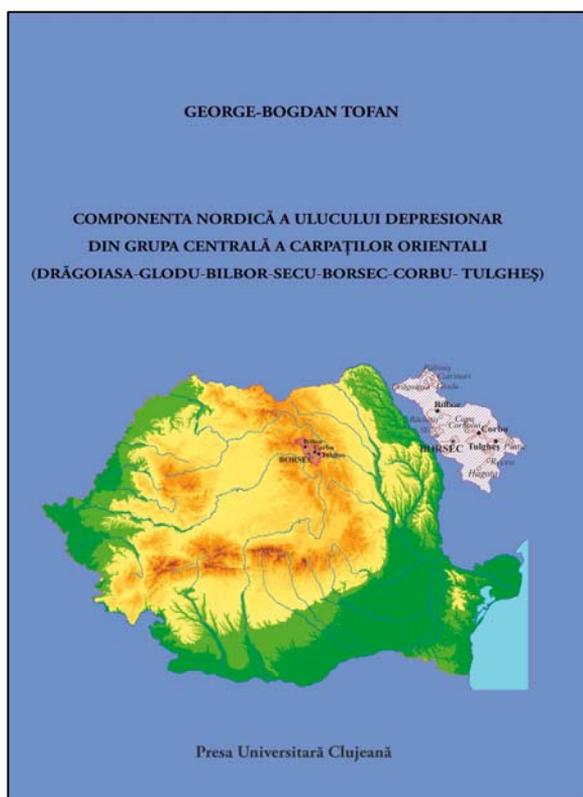


GEORGE-BOGDAN TOFAN (2013)
THE NORTHERN COMPONENT OF THE DEPRESSION ALIGNMENT
FROM THE EASTERN CARPATHIANS CENTRAL GROUP
(DRĂGOIASA-GLODU-BILBOR-SECU-BORSEC-CORBU-TULGHEȘ)

Cluj University Press, ISBN 978-973-595-499-4, 510 pages, 110 figures, 44 tables, preface,
summary in English language



The book at hand represents the first human geography study of this geographic entity – *Drăgoiasa-Tulgheș depression alignment*.

It is the result of extensive field research, geographic inquiries, opinion polls, questionnaires, and a deep scientific documentation, which involved consulting a large number of studies, as one can see in the Reference section (277 titles and 10 websites), explicitly quoted in the book's text, thus implying their actual reading. The theme of the book follows the tradition set by the *Human Geography Department* and by the *Cluj-Napoca Geographic School*, regarding the study of geographic entities, of social-economic and cultural spaces, highly representative for Romania.

This research set out to identify the specific favourability and restrictive components, as well as the phenomena that led to the population of the area and to the current configuration of the settlement network, its functional components, its demography, and culture, and to emphasize the characteristics of

the main pressure factor – *population*; the presentation of the specific activities from the three main sectors (primary, secondary, and tertiary) and pointing out types of landscapes and the social-economic development.

Special attention was given to field research, the author being born in these parts (Bilbor), - the foremost way of knowing the reality of Drăgoiasa-Tulgheș area, and the best method of obtaining the necessary information for a high quality portrayal of the area. The depth of the analysis is also visible in the manner in which the physical, human, and economic realities, as well

as the specificity of the entire landscape are presented, all directly correlated to the particularities of the natural resources and conditions. Knowing the natural components of the area is of the utmost importance, as they have set Drăgoiasa-Tulgheș alignment apart. These components greatly influenced the development of economic functions, the network of settlements, the configuration of the transport network and the degree of habitation.

Thus, chapter III (p. 41-154) analyses the *relief*, as a determining factor in the population of the depression alignment; *the hydrographic component*, which directly influences the organisation of the settlement and transport networks; *climate*; *the biopedogeographic components*, which determine land usage and the type of economic activity, the conclusions mirroring the depth of the analysis, and the ability to select and correlate phenomena and processes.

Chapter IV (p. 155-296) presents the *geographic-human prerequisites* of anthropisation, where the population is the most dynamic component of this area and a pressure factor on the entire geographic system, and is based on the author's ability to critically interpret scientific information, statistical data, as well as the large volume of information accumulated from field research. There is an emphasis not only on population evolution and dynamic factors, but also on population structure, the analysis of economic and demographic dependency, the average annual growth rate for the last 161 years, the migration and emmigration rates, etc.

One of the book's fundamental chapters (chapter V, 297-453) examines *the microregion's economic dimension*, pointing out factors that influenced agriculture and industry, as well as forestry and transports. Starting from the need to include the area in the internal and international touristic circuit and the proper creation of spaces with touristic value, the author evaluates the area's touristic resources, highlighting their richness, their uniqueness and originality, but also the necessity to preserve tradition and customs, architectural values, etc..

In the last chapter, the analytic and synthetic views amalgamates with valences of practical application when it comes to *territorial planning and development*, at a small (village) but also at a larger scale (the entire alignment), being a plea for environmental conservation and for rejuvenating traditional activities. The study contains a rich cartographic base, created with the help of GIS, all maps sharing a mutual core, and also photographic material, mostly captured by the author.

All of the above lead to the conclusion that this book brings several original contributions, mostly theoretical and methodological.

As a whole, this book by **George-Bogdan TOFAN** is a well rounded study of human geography, through which the author proves its competence as a researcher and his capability of tackling diverse issues in the field of geography, in general, and in the field of human geography, in particular.

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