

A MONOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF BEBA VECHE, TIMIS COUNTY, ROMANIA

COMLOȘAN DENISA AMELIA¹, DINCU ANA MARIANA¹,
MĂNESCU CAMELIA MARIA*¹,

¹*Banat University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Agricultural Management, Timisoara, Romania*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: cameliaoborocea2004@yahoo.com

Abstract: *This paper describes the main aspects of the monograph of Beba Veche, Timis County, Romania. It points out the natural, cultural, economic and social potential of the locality, as well as its local specificity. The main methods used to do that are observation, analysis, synthesis, and data interpretation (graphs). The analysis presented in this paper point out the key-problems of the commune of Beba Veche: unfavourable geographic location (isolation, remoteness), high-risk natural factors (weather phenomena), aging population, and poor infrastructure.*

Key words: *monographic analysis, Beba Veche,*

INTRODUCTION

The topic of this paper is of extreme importance because, in the context of socio-economic facts, sustainable development of rural localities should rely on a management strategy of activities, investments and effective management of existing resources. Developing such a development strategy needs to rely on a monographic study of the locality.

“Monographic studies are, in general, extremely complex works operating with data and figures regarding all domains of spiritual and socio-economic life of a locality or wider geographic area and their human communities.”[1].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main methods used in this scientific paper are observation, synthesis, data processing and data interpretation. Indirect observation was used in the study of bibliography and of statistic data, and direct observation was used in the field work.

RESEARCH RESULTS

• Geographic Location

The Commune of Beba Veche is located in western Timis County (and western Romania), at the border with Serbia and Hungary. Its coordinates are 20°15'44" Eastern longitude in the most western point of Romania, Triplex Confinium, where the borders of the three countries meet. The closest locality is Kübekháza, Hungary, about 1.5 km from Beba Veche (a road connected the two localities in the past). Nowadays, the only way to go from one locality to the other is via the customs of Cenad, after a detour of 60 km. The border acts as a barrier isolating the two localities. Beba Veche is 7 km far from Cherestur, 34 km far from Sânnicolau Mare, and 101 km far from Timisoara. The only access way to Beba Veche is the county road DJ 682 Sânnicolau Mare – Beba Veche. The closest railway station is Dudeștii-Vechi (26 km).



Figure 1. Commune of Beba Veche on the map of the Timiș County

Source: <http://www.hartaromanieionline.ro/harta-judet-Timis/> [13]

The Commune of Beba Veche has three villages: Beba Veche (commune residence) and Cherestur and Pordeanu.

Beba Veche is neighbouring:

- In the north-west, with Hungary;
- In the East, with the village of Cheglevici, Commune of Dudeștii-Vechi, Romania;
- In the South, with the Village of Valcani, Commune of Dudeștii-Vechi, Romania;
- In the South-West, with Serbia.

The Customs at Cenad is the administrative limit of the communes of Beba Veche and Cenad (8 km) at the border with Hungary, and the Customs at Valcani is 18 km far on the communal road DC2 Beba Veche – Valcani.

• Identity Elements

Beba Veche, as pointed to by its name (Rom veche ‘old’), is **one of the oldest human settlements of Banat**. The Hungarians called it Obeba, i.e. Beba Veche, because of its old age. Romanian historian Nicolae Ilieșiu claims that, until the 5th century, the name of the locality was Vitoliu after the Roman emperor Aulus Vitellius Germanicus (15-69 A.D.).

The first document attesting Beba Veche dates back from 1247: during the reign of King Bela IV, it was mentioned as O Beba in a chronicle preserved at the Museum of History in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

The official coat of arms of Beba Veche was adopted by the Romanian Government (Government Decision No. 807/2012). It consists in a triangular blue shield with rounded margins crossed by a wide golden fork. In the upper part, there is a golden walking cock armed and limbed. In the middle of the shield, on the fork, there is an obelisk on a three-step red pedestal. On top of the shield, on the fork, there is a red bridge with

four arched arcs (basket handle). The shield is marked by a mural silver crown with battlement tower.

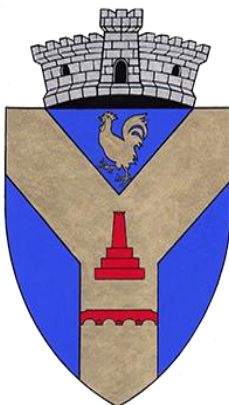


Figure 2. Official coat of arms of Beba Veche

Source: http://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Comuna_Beba_Veche [6]

The fork suggests the meeting place of the three country borders (Romania, Serbia and Hungary), and the cock sends to the saying according to which its song can be heard in the three countries. The “Triplex Confinium” obelisk was raised on May 4, 1920, after the Trianon Treaty, and it suggests the meeting point of the borders of the three countries. The bridge, called “Podul Răbii” or “Podul Grâului”, was built in the first half of the 18th century over a tributary (nowadays drained) of the Mures River. The mural crown with battlement tower suggest the locality is a commune.

- **Natural Setting**

Relief. Beba Veche is located in the Torontalului Plain, 80 m mean altitude; the soil is high quality: it is made up of chernozems, marshy soils, and gleized soils developed under poorly drained low plain conditions where groundwater is at low levels. There are also strains, patches or wider areas of salted soils. Analyses conducted by the Office for Soil Studies (OSPA Timis) defined the soils at Beba Veche as 3rd fertility class [7]

Climate. Beba Veche is dominated by a moderate temperate continental climate with Mediterranean influences due to the fact that it is protected by the Carpathian Mountain chain that prevents cold air from north and north-east and allows hot air from south-west and west. This makes winters milder with a positive mean temperature (0.3°C). Mean annual temperature is 10.8°C. The mean multiannual amount of precipitations is 536.5 mm, with the most abundant precipitations in May and June (23-25% of the mean annual amount); rainfall oscillations are rather high from one year to another (with a limit of 250 mm); crops are stressed by moisture excess particularly during the first part of vegetation, while during the latter vegetation period (after August) humidity is insufficient.

- **Population**

According to the census of 2011, the population of Beba Veche was 1,539 inhabitants, less than that of 2002, when there were 1,600 inhabitants. In 2016, Beba Veche had 1,592 inhabitants, and nowadays it counts only 1,578 inhabitants.

Table 1.

Evolution of the population in Beba Veche

Year	1880	1910	1941	1977	1992	2002	2011	2012	2016	2017
Inhabitants	4576	4182	3655	2142	1625	1600	1539	1564	1592	1578

Source: After *Populația României pe localități, ianuarie 2016*, INS, România, 2016, https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comuna_Beba_Veche,_Timi%C8%99, <http://statistici.INSSE.ro/shop/>, http://www.cjtimis.ro/judetul-timis/unitati-administrativ-teritoriale/comuna-Beba_Veche.html [10, 12, 11,8]

As for gender structure, in 2016, of the 1,592 inhabitants, 843 were men and 749 were women.

Table 2.**Evolution of the ethnic structure of the population of Beba Veche (census years)**

Year	Total	Romanians	Hungarians	Germans	Roma	Others
1880	4,576	1,838	2,212	507	-	19
1910	4,182	1,854	1,819	417	-	92
1941	3,655	1,452	1,721	351	-	131
1977	2,142	988	985	90	41	38
1992	1,625	898	640	19	47	21
2002	1,600	979	567	19	30	5
2011	1,539	951	498	20	18	52

Source: After Populația României pe localități, ianuarie 2016, INS, România, 2016, https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comuna_Beba_Veche,_Timi%C8%99, <http://statistici.insse.ro/shop/>, http://www.cjtimis.ro/judetul-timis/unitati-administrativ-teritoriale/comuna-Beba_Veche.html [10, 12, 11,8]

As far as the ethnic structure is concerned (Table 2), most inhabitants are Romanians (61.79%). The main minorities are Hungarians (32.36%), Germans (1.3%) and Roma (1.17%). There is no known ethnicity for 3.18% of the population.

- **Economy**

Economic activity is dominated by agriculture due to the large share (93.8%) of agricultural land. As for the structure of agricultural land per use categories, arable land represents 88.4% din total and pastures 11.0%; other categories are below 1%.

Table 3.**Structure of land fund at Beba Veche (2014)**

Specification	Area		
	(ha)	(%)	
Total area	9,404	100	-
Agricultural land, of which:	8,817	93.8	100
arable	7,792	-	88.4
pastures	976	-	11.0
haymaking fields	3	-	0.1
vineyards and viticultural nurseries	16	-	0.2
orchards and fruit tree nurseries	30	-	0.3
Non-agricultural land, of which:	587	6.2	100
forests and forest vegetation	4	-	0.7
covered by water and marches	216	-	37.0
occupied by buildings	189	-	32.0
roads and railways	164	-	28.0
degraded unproductive areas	14	-	2.3

Source: After <http://statistici.insse.ro/shop/> [11]

The main crops cultivated in the commune are wheat, rye, grain maize and sunflower cultivated on 90% of the arable area, while only 10% is cultivated with vegetables and potato.

As for livestock, the main species are cattle, swine and poultry due to the grain crops and sheep due to the pastures representing 11% of the agricultural land.

- **Infrastructure**

County and communal road networks. Beba Veche relies on a county road - DJ 682 measuring 11.74 km and on two communal roads - DC 1 measuring 9.5 km and DC 3 measuring 3.0 km.

The village of residence, Beba Veche, is 7 km from Cherestur and 11 km from Pordeanu.

The water supply network measures 12 km in Beba Veche, 5.6 km in Cherestur and 2.05 km in Pordeanu.

Electricity supply. Beba Veche is completely connected to the electricity supply system.

- **Social Aspects**

Education. Beba Veche benefits from pre-school, primary and gymnasium in:

- Kindergartens with normal schedule: Beba Veche and Cherestur;
- Primary schools (forms I-IV): Beba Veche and Cherestur;
- Gymnasium (forms V-VIII): Beba Veche.

Health. There is a medical office with a doctor and a nurse, as well as a human pharmacy.

Culture and religion. There are community centres in Beba Veche and Cherestur, and a sports ground in Beba Veche.

The churches, monasteries and other worship places are:

- The Romanian Orthodox Church in Beba Veche, built in 1779 to replace the wooden church from 1600;
- The Greek-Catholic Church in Beba Veche, built in 1857;
- The Roman-Catholic Church in Beba Veche, built in 1993, and Roman-Catholic Church in Cherestur, built in 1870;
- The Pentecostal Church in Beba Veche, built in 2004;
- The Betel House of Prayer in Beba Veche, built in 2006.

Saint patron day and other cultural-religious festivals in the commune are the Saint Patron Day in Beba Veche on August 15 (Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary) and the Saint Patron Day in Cherestur on September 8 (Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary).

Monuments of heroes and commemorative works raised to honour Romanian and foreign soldiers are in Beba Veche:

- Monuments to the heroes of World War I and World War II;
- Commemorative Cross to honour the heroes of World War I.

CONCLUSIONS

- Beba Veche, the most western point of Romania, has an unfavourable geographical location because it is isolated from the rest of localities; however, its economic prospects are favourable:

- Due to the close admission of Romania to Schengen, there will be a border point with Hungary in the locality;

- There is an ongoing project operated by the commune hall of Beba Veche and the Timis County Council, together with Serbian and Hungarian counterpart, to open an industrial park, Triplex Confinium, at the meeting point of the borders of the three countries, which could turn Beba Veche into an industrial locality.

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