

The history and memory of houses in an Ethnographic Park. An innovative approach

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Abstract.

The Ethnographic Parks usually presents, to their visitors, houses, tools, folk costumes, household items, installations with an accent on traditions and customs. But the soul of those houses was given by the people that lived there and their history should be cherished along with those traditions. How difficult can it be to rebuild the memory of a family that lived in such a house for generations, from the construction time up to moving to the park, it is shown in this paper. The subject is the research done in order to find the descendants of such a family from the northern part of Transylvania, German ethnic (Saxons), even though nobody from their original village, Jelna (Senndorf) remembered it. They left by carriages, along with all the others of the same ethnicity, not only from that village but from all the area, when Romania, former ally of Germany in the Second World War, become Russia's ally on the 23rd of August 1944. The direction was Austria and Germany. Some of them made it and settled there, others not, being caught behind the war front line and dying in labour camps in Russia or surviving and returning to the village where their homes were meanwhile taken by others. Some of the members of this specific family, that escaped, managed to arrive in a market town in Upper Austria and settled there together with other 14 families from their village. A story behind a house of The Ethnographic Park "Romulus Vuia", Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Keywords: Transylvania; war; ethnicity; village; German

1. Introduction

In general, the main purpose of an open-air ethnographic museum is to exhibit old houses, churches, installations from the communities that are represented there, maintaining it in their original shape by using as much as possible the old technics and materials, completed with artifacts that are related to the traditions and the old way of life, eventually to acquire more such items, and to present it to the visitors. Besides the tangible materials, an important role plays the intangible heritage, meaning the culture, the practices, the rituals, the usage of different tools, that help the visitor's immersion in another time and space, for a better understanding of the old way of life, especially rural, which slowly disappears. Of course, different kinds of cultural events take place in such sites, from folk music and dance performances, to demonstrations of old crafts and traditional products fairs. One thing is missing in general, and that is the history and the memory of those houses and of the real

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people that built it, of the generations that lived there in the past, up to the time of moving the house in the open-air museum. The visitors are very much interested to find out who actually lived there and what happened to those people. These legitimate questions are very hard to be answered without a thorough and time-consuming research in this respect. By doing this, those houses can be brought to life in a more authentic way and thus enhancing the visitors' interest for such parks.

1.1 Purpose/Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to demonstrate how important is for an Ethnographic Park to explore the history and memory of the exhibited houses and how much added value it can bring. My demonstration is based on such an example of a house in The Ethnographic Park "Romulus Vuia", Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Here there are exhibited houses, churches and installations from different communities of Transylvania, that belonged to families of different ethnicities – Romanian, Hungarian and German, the last two being nowadays the main minorities of this historical region. In this paper it is presented the most difficult example from this Park, a house built in 1789 (Fig.1), that belonged to a German (Saxon) ethnic family from Jelna (germ. Senndorf) with almost no information available about it.

Figure 1: German (Saxon) house in the Ethnographic Park



Source: (<https://www.muzeul-etnografic.ro/ro/obiective-muzeale>)

1.1.1 Methodology/Approach

The methodological framework was developed and enriched during the research. The sources used were monographs of the related village and the neighbouring one as well, the county archives, the archive of the Ethnographic National Museum of Transylvania, memorial works. The methods used included researching in detail the house in the Ethnographic Park for identifying any relevant details, contacting local authorities, conducting research in the respective village with identification of the initial location of the house, interviews with the village elders and ethnical organisation representatives, consultation of county and parish

archives, interviews of the last owners with no relation to the original ones, extending the research abroad, in Germany and Austria, in libraries and archives, contacting key people that in the end, made the connection with the descendants of the family that built this house and lived in it up to 1944.

2. Background

2.1 Historical background

Transylvania is a historical region located in central Romania, Eastern Europe, surrounded by the Carpathian mountains in west, south and east.

In ancient times it was part of The Dacian Kingdom, then of the Roman Empire, battlefield of the migratory populations for centuries, then incorporated in The Hungarian Kingdom as Voievodship, later an autonomous principality under Ottoman sovereignty, part of The Austrian Empire and eventually of The Austrian-Hungarian Empire. After The First World War it became part of Romania, with four years break during The Second World War when the Northern part of Transylvania reverted to The Hungarian Kingdom, reclaimed by Romania in 1944.

The colonization of the German population in Transylvania (Transylvanian Saxons) took place in several stages, for defence purposes and need of skilled workers. In exchange, the invited colonists received land and freedom of movement and trade.

The Saxons from north-eastern Transylvania, came in the first stage, primarily from the Moselle Valley, by then belonging to the County of Luxembourg, as well as from the North-Western part of Lorraine, during the reign of the Hungarian King Geza II (1141-1162). The colonies were divided into five chapters arranged in three areas - Bistrita, Teaca and Reghin. In the Bistrița area there were three chapters - Bistrița (Nösen), which also included Jelna (Senndorf), Chiraleș (Kirieleis) and Șieu (Gross-Schogen). (Pintilei & Horst, 2004)

Jelna (Senndorf) was first mentioned in 1264, in a document issued by Pope Urban IV. By 1333 it already had 250 inhabitants. The first census conducted by ethnicity, in 1754, revealed that 250 Saxons, 45 Romanians and 5 Gypsies lived in Jelna (Senndorf). Until 1930, censuses were carried out exclusively by mother tongue. For example, in 1910, the last census before the Union of Transylvania with Romania there were 409 Saxons, 59 Romanians, 2 Hungarians, 125 Gypsies and 7 Jews. In 1930, the last differentiated data (by ethnicity) before the Second World War, showed 348 Saxons, 87 Romanians, 142 Gypsies. For a more complete picture of the situation in 1930, there are also data about the religion, namely 459 Evangelical-Lutheran of Augustan Confession, 98 Greek Catholics, 7 Roman Catholics, 1 Reformed and 12 Mosaic. (Böhm, 1985)

2.1 The location in the Ethnographic Park and initial data

The studied house is located in the Western part of the Ethnographic Park “Romulus Vuia”, Cluj-Napoca. It was purchased in 1976, according to a document stating the intention of buying the related house, found in the Archive of the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania. The owner was unknown.

Fortunately, there was an inscription on a house's beam, which shows that generations of a Saxon family in Jelna (Senndorf) have lived in this house, since 1789.

The inscription was this:

MONES EISNER YEAR 1789 APR 4

In this way, the date of construction's completion was known, April 4, 1789 as well as the name of the person who built the house, Mones Eisner.

3. Findings/Results

The village of origin, Jelna (germ. Senndorf), Bistrița-Năsăud County and an inscription on the house's beam, showing the owner and the construction date, were the only known information at the beginning of this research.

3.1. The original location of the house in Jelna (Senndorf)

Considering that the house belonged to a Saxon family, it was contacted The Democratic Forum of Germans Bistrița. A meeting there helped with a better understanding of the history of the local Saxons, also through a story of a particular family from Jelna (Senndorf), and the departure of the Saxons from the village in 1944.

One of the Forum's members even knew about this particular house so a visit was paid to the village. In his youth, he had the house right opposite to the Saxon house that is the object of this research. He witnessed its disassembly in order to be moved to the Ethnographic Park. The family that lived in the house at that time was, however, Romanian. With his help, it was found the original location of the house and what remained there out of it: a stone from the house's entrance, a barn and a well. Also, it was organised a meeting with the daughter of the person who sold the house to the Ethnographic Park, as she was living right in the village. She was only four years old when the house was sold so she had very few memories and no documents related to the house, left from her parents. Also, no one else in the village remembered the Saxon family that owned the house for generations, in the past.

3.2. First explanatory book for this research

The only book found about the Saxons in the proximity of Jelna (Senndorf) was about a neighbouring village, Budacul de Jos, "Deutsch Budaker Heimatbuch. Wie's Daheim einst war", author Johann Dofi, 2004. Being written in German and without knowing the language, the solution was to translate it entirely with Google Translate. This process took a long time, but it was the only source from which it was possible to obtain information, in that stage, about the direct experience of the Saxons in the nearest area.

3.3. Sources in Germany

Further, continuing the research, a new information emerged. The Saxons' archives from different villages are located at Horneck Castle in Gundelsheim, Germany. There, it was contacted the head of the Transylvanian Cultural Center, who explained that Jelna (Senndorf) had no longer its own organization of local Saxon emigrants (Heimatortsgemeinschaft) and so there is no way to contact a representative.

The person in charge of the archive within The Transylvanian Institute and the related Library was contacted in order to check what was available about Jelna (Senndorf). Unfortunately, nothing was found, only 12 pages of generalities.

Another idea was to try to find descendants or people who knew something about this family, Eisner (as it results from the inscription on the beam of the house), in an annual Saxon event that took place online.

From the “Haus des Deutschen Ostens” Library in Munich, however, it was obtained a book about Jelna, “Senndorf im Siebenbürgen”, author Georg Böhm, 1985, edited in Austria, and which unfortunately does not exist in Romania. Of course, being also in German, the translation was made in the same slow way, with Google Translate. It was a very well documented book, from the archives and from the testimonials of the Saxons who left the village, the author being one of them, namely the son of the last village’s Saxon Mayor. This became, further, my working tool.

3.4. The study of the book “Senndorf im Siebenbürgen” - Results

3.4.1. The original address of the house

The book contains a map of the village before 1944. Comparing it with the current map, it could be observed, in the houses’ location line, that the trajectory of the main road has been changed. At that time, the house studied was on the main street, while now it is on a secondary road. Counting the houses’ lots, the location on the old map was identified.

In the document regarding the intention for the acquisition by the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania, it appears the house had the number 53. On the gate of the house in the Ethnographic Park is number 52, so it doesn’t correspond to the house’s number in the document, that was 53. The explanation may come from the fact that the gate did not belong to the house but was purchased from another village, according to a distinct document. However, the number 60 appears at the address of this seller.

Neither 52 nor 53 appear in the book “Senndorf im Siebenbürgen”, as numbers of a house belonging to any Saxon family, which led to the idea that the houses were renumbered before 1976 when it was purchased by the Ethnographic Museum.

The book also contains a list of the Saxon families that lived in each house after 1850 to 1944, so it was possible to trace the Eisner family name. There were identified three houses in which people with this name lived, with numbers 3, 65 and 85. Given that at number 85 the first Eisner lived in the house by marriage, this belonging to another family, it turned out that it was not the house of the searched one. At number 65, the first person to appear on the list is Eisner, but it is K. Eisner, in 1868, coming from another family. It turned out that this house did not belong to the Eisner family generations ago, as it was the one from 1789 that it was researched.

At number 3 the list has as the oldest owner J. Eisner, born in 1880 (as mentioned above, the list does not contain older information) and then two more generations, all their members being born here. Given the fact that in the old map the house’s location identified during the visit, is the third from the entrance to the village, it can be deduced that the counting started from this part.

Considering these two elements, namely, that the list shows that three generations of the Eisner family were born here and that the number 3 of the house in the list corresponds to the fact that the location was third house from the entrance to the village, it led to the conclusion that this was the house, old number 3, and the family Eisner that lived there, on which the research should be continued.

3.4.2. Family members who lived in the house studied

Translating the book, a lot of information were found and deduced from the memories shared there by other members of the Jelna (Senddorf) Saxon community about Eisner family. Those information will be supplemented with face-to-face interviews.

All those mentioned below lived in the house.

Mones Eisner

He is the one who built the house in 1789, according to the inscription on the beam.

No information about the next generation yet.

M. E.

Born in the house studied, it appears to be the nephew of Moness Eisner, M. was the Mayor of Jelna (Senddorf) village in 1884, according to the list of mayors over time. In this information appears only the initial of the first name.

Continuing the translation of the book, the full first name it was revealed. It was written on a valuable jug's handle. The year 1880 was also written on this piece. The jug used to be filled with good wine on the second day of Easter and carried by the head of the group of the "Bruderschaft", made up of unmarried young men, when they were going to throw water on girls, an old custom. They were accompanied by a troupe of gypsy musicians, from one end of the village to the other. On one side of the pitcher's neck is written "Wivat Gemeinde" and on the opposite side "Senndorf", meaning Vivat Senndorf community. On the jug's body it is also written "Wivat Brüder Yung und Alt 1880" (Vivat Bothers Young and Old 1880). The ceramic jug is 42 cm high and it is unique in its shape, a high quality Transylvanian Saxon piece. Professor E. B. from Berlin bought this jug from a Romanian from Jelna (Senddorf), then gave it to the Transylvanian Museum, at Horneck Castle.

J. E.

The son of M. E., was born in the related house on 1880 and died in 1953 in Jelna (Senddorf). He was married to E. K.. She was born in 1884, and died in Frankenmarkt, Upper Austria in 1976. J. E. was part of the Evangelical Church's Presbytery, according to a photograph from 1931 that represents its members.

In 1933 he helped to install the pastor of the Jelna - Budac - Monariu district and supported him for 3 years, until 1936, while he served here. This common parish, based in Jelna, was

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founded following the major financial and economic crisis of the Romanian State and, subsequently, of the Saxon farmers. For this reason, individual parishes could no longer fully gather the prescribed church taxes for their employees and pay salaries, so they sought ways to ease congregations in this regard by merging smaller communities into district parishes if they were to agree and if they were close in distance to each other.

J. E. was also for many years at the head of the Evangelical Community provided by the Presbytery, and he ensured its administration as treasurer. It was also found out that in 1938 he donated the globe that was placed on the village tower's roof, a tower built in 1560 and named Siegfried, which had just been rebuilt at that time. The globe has also been renewed

with this occasion. This new globe was donated by J.E. in memory of his parents, siblings and deceased children (in 1967, when the tower was taken over by the Orthodox Church, the globe was replaced with a cross). Then, his 6-year-old nephew G. G. said a prayer and the congregation, accompanied by the village band, sang. During the song, the globe of the tower was raised and put in its place by the craftsman who rebuilt the roof.

J. E. had two children, J. and S.

J. E., son

The son of J. and K. E., was born in 1907 and died in 1947 in Russia.

S. E.

The daughter of J. and K., was born in 1911. In 1985, when the book was written, she was living in Frankenmarkt, Upper Austria. She was a member of the Evangelical Women's Association of Senndorf (Jelna) - Die Frauen des Evangelischer Frauenvereins Senndorf according to a photo from 1930, where she could be seen at the age of 19.

She married G. G. and had three children, G., J. and M.

G. G., father

S. E.'s husband was born in 1908 in Jelna, (Senndorf) and died in 1982 in Frankenmarkt.

He was part of the village music band, according to another picture taken in 1935, at the age of 27. In another picture he appears together with the members of the Evangelical Association of Sisters and Brothers in Senndorf (Jelna) in 1941. He served as Head (Parent) of the Knechtenvater Association (Association of young men).

G. G., son

The eldest son of S. and G. G., was born in 1932 in the studied house, and in 1985, the year the book was written, he was living in Nuremberg, Germany.

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J. G.

The middle son of S. and G. G. was born in 1937 and died in 1978 in Frankenmarkt.

M. G.

The youngest son of S. and G. G., was born on February 2, 1940 and in 1985 was living in Frankenmarkt.

3.4.3. The family, after 1944

Fully translating the book, it was revealed the path of the Saxons from Jelna (Senndorf) and implicitly of the members of the E.-G. family, inhabitants of the house studied, caused by the Second World War.

3.4.3.1. J. E., son

The first member of the family to leave the village was J. E., son, born in 1907. He died in Russia, in a forced labour camp, as stated in the related book.

According to the memories of another Saxon from the same village, that was taken also in forced labour camp in Russia, it could be followed J.E.'s path also. They got enlisted in the German army on April 12, 1944, during which they fought in the Battle of Halbe, part of the Battle of Berlin, the last of The Second World War. They were taken prisoners by the Russian Army on April 29, 1944, along with other 250 soldiers. Their belongings were taken away, were interrogated and beaten. They spent the night in a forest from where they could see Berlin on fire in a deafening noise of bombs, planes and sirens. The next morning, it began the 18-day march to Opole Groszowice (Opoln Groschewitz) in Silesia. Many had to walk barefoot because their good shoes were taken away. They lived only on potatoes and water all the way. There, 300 war prisoners worked hard on the Oder canal, unloading wood and coal from tugs for a month, fed only with clear soup and bread. In June, they marched through Silesia, where they were insulted by the population. Despite the heat, they received water and soup only once a day. After five weeks, they arrived at Bratislava (Pressburg) where they were detained for another three weeks and told that they would be released and everyone would go home. But they were put in wagons to Focşani, Romania. They understood that this was not the way home but to Russia. The train with 800 men went non-stop. Two of the prisoners tried to escape, jumping out of the car. Only one succeeded, the other one being killed. When they arrived at the camp in Focşani, after 14 days, they were examined immediately and were finally allowed to wash themselves. People had become so weak that they could hardly stand. They slept on the empty concrete floor of a former hall for two months.

On October 28, 1945 they were put back on the trains. For some it was the beginning of their last journey. This time some Russian soldiers were even posted on the roofs of the wagons, so that they would be better guarded and no one could escape. The journey in cattle wagons lasted 14 days. Outside a city to be identified, near the Ural Mountains, it was released a stable, large enough to accommodate 1,600 people. There were straws in the big stable

building, but there were no windows, just a single door. It was winter already, minus 30 degrees Celsius and most of the prisoners did not even have a thick coat. Many had severe cold and needed infirmary. They could not sleep at night because of beetles and lice. There were so many lice, as it was stated, that their shirts and jackets were completely white. Prisoners of war fell ill with scabies, dysentery and infectious diseases from parasites, and in the spring only half of the men were still alive.

In the spring of 1946, the prisoners were taken further south to Pyatigorsk. They arrived there in May, were examined, cleaned of lice and bedbugs and allowed to wash. They were so weak that they could not work. The food was a little better here, as were the bedrooms. There were even wooden beds with straw. But even here people got sick and were very frail. They were taken to the hospital in the Nalchik camp, where dysentery and scabies were added. Every day two or three prisoners died. One of them, according to the date of death, was J. E., the son.

3.4.3.2. Departure from Senndorf (Jelna)

The rest of the family consisting of J. E., the father (64 years old), his wife, K. (60 years old), their daughter S. (33 years old) together with her husband G. G. (36 years old) and their three children, G. (12 years), J. (7 years) and M. (4 years) left with the other Saxons from Jelna (Senndorf).

After the 23rd of August 1944 coup d'état, when Romania became, from a Germany ally, a Russia's one, General Arthur Phelps was commissioned by the German leadership to rescue the Germans (Saxons) from Transylvania and Banat. On September 12, 1944 it was signed the armistice between Romania and The Allies and immediately after, Mayor J. B. was ordered to leave the village of Jelna (Senndorf) with all the Saxon inhabitants, equipped with food and clothing supplies. This was to take place on September 18 at 7 o'clock in the morning, and was to go to Beclean (Bethlen), approximate 40 km distance. On that day and at the appointed time, the bells rang and everybody cried. 6 people did not leave, remaining in the village. Mayor B. went in front of the caravan of 70 carts and 362 people, knowing, as he confessed in the book, that he will not turn back again. They had been told that they would only go as far as Beclean and that they would return when the enemy was repulsed, but that didn't happen. Thus began the exodus of those from Jelna (Senndorf), part of a total of 30,000 Saxons from Northern Transylvania that left then. (Dorfi, 2004)

The relatively orderly journey from Jelna (Senndorf) to Lower Austria in the Mistelbach district lasted seven weeks. In Ernsbrunn, where they arrived on November 6, 1944, they were well received by farmers from eleven surrounding villages, in exchange of their help with agriculture. They also spent the winter there until April 8, 1945. After another three weeks, the order came to go on to Upper Austria but there were difficulties before this trip. People were so worried about the chaos on the streets and the contradictory reports on the radio that most of them didn't want to go any further.

3.4.3.3. The way back home – J. E., the father

One of them was J. E., the father, who decided to return to Jelna (Senndorf), trying to save his house and land, hoping that the rest of the family would join him later. According to the memories of another Saxon from Jelna (Senndorf), when it was said on May 9, 1945 that the

war was over, everyone was wondering what would happen to them, to the refugees. The men asked the authorities and, as the Russians soldiers were already everywhere, they were told that everyone should return home, each to his homeland. So, many thought of going back. But no one suspected the great danger they faced, because it was still too early and there was no order or security anywhere. However, J. E., along with members of 11 other families, set out for home in mid-May 1945. Other 8 families joined then along the way.

It was a dangerous journey for everyone, as the streets were crowded with Polish and Czech people that were returning home and many Russian soldiers. They were often robbed and eventually spent the night near Vienna in the Fischamend community. The next day, despite of the warnings from the locals, they moved on. When they passed through Hungary, they were completely at the mercy of people, often stopped and robbed again. Then walked for weeks through the Hungarian plain. They asked for some food in the villages and individual houses and lived for days with old bread and water. People and horses were exhausted, but they continued slowly. At the border with Romania, they were immediately taken to Oradea prison yard by the Romanian police, where the place and date of birth for everyone were recorded. The elderly and children were allowed to go home but without horses and carts, because they had been confiscated. J. E., the 65-year-old father, was among them. But for J. E. and for those people who were allowed to go home, at that time there was actually no home to return to. All the Saxons were outlawed, no one was allowed to enter his house, all the houses were occupied by Romanians and Gypsies remained in the village. In August 1945, after returning from the Bistrița camp, several Saxon families had to live together in one house. Some were accommodated in the kitchen behind of another house, the other rooms being full of other locals. The Saxons lived on their own land as day laborers, fought a bitter struggle for their daily bread. The Saxons were entirely at the mercy of the locals, as they had no rights. Things like this happened very often at that time. A total of 72 people returned to Jelna (Senndorf). Years passed before things got a little better, people working hard for very low wages. Faith and hope were the strongest pillars to which the Saxons clung at the time. J. E. died in 1953, at the age of 73. Unfortunately, he didn't live up to 1957 when, in March, a new law gave all the Germans in the country their homes and gardens back.

In conclusion, the studied house did not come into his possession remaining in the use of the locals that had occupied it. On this track, the research will continue at the County Service of the National Archives.

3.4.3.4. The road from Lower Austria to Frankenmarkt - The rest of the E. family

When J. E. went back home, the rest of the family that was with him in Lower Austria, in the district of Mittelbach, moved on to Upper Austria, along with 14 other families. According to the memories shared in the book studied, from May to October 1945, they had to live in barracks near Vöcklamarkt before finding accommodation with farmers.

The largest Saxon community from Jelna (Senndorf) was formed in Frankenmarkt. A first couple had the courage to start over and settle there. In October 1951 they bought a piece of land in Frankenmarkt and in 1952 they started to build a single-family house. Gradually, almost all the Transylvanian Saxons, who remained in this area, followed their example. At that time, the technical means were not available as they are today and, if they had been, no one would have allowed themselves to use them. For this reason, the cellars and foundations

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were dug by hand. The supply of bricks was still difficult and expensive. It was not uncommon to be produced domestically. The cooperation between people was exemplary, so the following houses were built with mutual assistance, a total of 20 houses including the house of G. and S. G., and the house of M. (their son) and his wife.

The market town of Frankenmarkt was another research direction since in the said book there are written all those addresses.

3.5. The Saxons from Jelna (Senndorf)

In Jelna (Senndorf) no one remembered this family. This is why. According to the studied book, out of a total of 368 Saxons living in the village in 1944, 362 left in September and 6 remained at home. By 1985 when the book was written, of the 362 who left, 152 had died, 5 were missing, 127 were living in Austria, 39 in Germany, 23 in the US, 5 in Canada, 6 in Romania, 1 in Australia, 1 in France, 1 in Switzerland, 1 in the Netherlands, 1 residence unknown. Of the 72 who returned home in 1945, 31 died. Of the remaining 41, 39 emigrated in 1970 and 2 remained in the village. 6 did not leave in 1944 out of which 5 died and one later emigrated to Germany. So, back in 1985, there were only two Saxons left in Jelna (Senndorf). It's no wonder that in 2020 there were no Saxons anymore in the village, which could provide information about the family sought and the house studied.

4. Conclusion/Implications

4.1. Next steps

The steps for further research will be carried out in the following directions:

1. Studying Jelna (Senndorf) sources from the point of view of the traditions, customs, daily life of the Saxons in the village in order to recreate it
2. Studying the county archive from Bistrița to identify the rest of the owners over time and any other details related to this property.
3. Travel to Frankenmarkt and interview the relevant people for this research in order to reconstruct, with the help of their memories, the experiences of those who lived in the house, the memory and history of the house itself and of the generations of this family, and to verify and complete the information found in the related book, "Senndorf im Siebenbürgen".

4.2. Conclusion

This part of the Saxon house research was chosen to be presented due to its complexity, the work being carried out both in Cluj-Napoca, at the Ethnographic Park, at the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania studying the archive, in Jelna (Senndorf) village, in the city of Bistrița, in Germany and Austria, and due to its European dimension.

Also, it is an example of what can be discovered if this kind of research is thoroughly conducted, adding value to every house in an Ethnographic Park. Taking into consideration that this information could be easily disseminated to the general public, in the country and abroad, through the Park's website, its own publications, promotions, through activities of reconstitution of the old way of life, by presenting the results of the research at national and international conferences as well as by publishing in the Yearbook of the Ethnographic

Museums and in other profile publications and mass-media, it can contribute to a better understanding of history. Through testimonials of the actual people that lived in the house and of their descendants that knows from their parents and grand-parents information about the old life, memories about every corner of the specific house and how was developing their day-to-day life inside and outside the house, it is the most authentic way to reconstruct the life of the multi ethnic, multi confessional and multicultural historical regions.

A further step could be the introduction of those villages in a circuit of knowledge and promotion of their memory, a revival of traditions and customs through the participation of descendants and villagers to the reconstruction of the old life within the Ethnographic Park, as well as such actions organised in the villages of origin. Especially during this pandemic time, the people appreciate even more the immersion in the authentic rural life and the experience of the community intertwined with the surrounding nature, avoiding crowded cities and touristic objectives. This approach could be a source of knowledge, of reconstitution of the life and memory of the related villages and the surrounding areas, both for specialists and for the general public, from the country and from abroad. Those villages could further benefit from exposure that would help them rediscover and present their past to the visitors, thus preserving their cultural heritage for the future. For all the above, The Ethnographic Park would be the initiator and the coordinator, increasing its visibility and attraction for visitors.

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