

## Embourgeoisement among the Swabians of Vojvodina

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The localization of the settlements inhabited by the Swabians in Bačka, Banat and Sylvania was in favour of the achievement of bourgeois status, since a considerable amount of Germanic people became concentrated in many cities of the Southern land, such as Novi Sad, Sombor, Timișoara, Zrenjanin, Vršac, Zemun and Ruma. Furthermore these cities were also surrounded by settlements, reside by Germanic people, thus –the migrants included- the amount of the Swabian residents became even larger. In addition to this, in many homogeneous Swabian settlements the representatives of the industrialization (primarily in the areas of hemp-, tobacco-, and sugar-conversion, brewery and brickmaking) were selected from the class of squatter-peasantry. We can state that these settlements made a great stride forward urbanization at the turn of the century. The main point of the Swabian bourgeoisie of Vojvodina was composed by industrialists and merchandizers, not by civil servants or the magistral stratum. All of the above mentioned factors contributed to the fact that the embourgeoisement of the Swabians of Vojvodina did not necessarily go with the assimilation. We can observe a reverse phenomenon at the Germanic inhabitants of Transdanubia at the turn of the century.

*Keywords:* Swabians, cities inhabited by Swabians, Banat, Bačka, Sylvania, processing industry.

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### *Maps:*

East-Central Europe before World War I.  
Pannonian Basin

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The Swabians established flourishing allodials a lot sooner, than the other commons of the Vojvodina, by the help of the improved agricultural techniques of their original home. Thus they could acquire advantages in the field of agriculture. The top stratum of the differentiated rural society got connected with commerce or established manufactures. In the cities the forwarders of the embourgeoisement were the owner of the craft-unions and the merchandisers.

The events of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 had an effect on the beginning of the Swabian national movement. Since the Swabians had quite a short history, did not have any mother-nation and had a local and linguistic affiliation rather than a national, this movement could move along rather slowly.

Partially the Swabians of the Vojvodina could maintain their cultural and national identity because unlike the other Swabians of Hungary, they lived on a land of ambivalent nationalities. So besides the Hungarian liberal ideas, the Serb and Romanian national movements also had an effect on their borgeois movement.

The Swabians of the former frontier zone of the Banat and the bordering cities, got help from the Serbs and Romanians fighting for their vernacular rights against the expanding hungarisational policy. Besides these two nations, the Swabians asked the Saxons of Transylvania for help, but this process could start off rather slowly, because even though the language connected them, the geographical distance and the different historical and cultural background was in the way of their fellowship.

The political collaboration of the Germanic bourgeoisie of Hungary started at the beginning of World War I. The founder of this process was Edmund Steinacker. He tried to gather together the Germanic bourgeoisie in various Hungarian areas for the sake of the national movement, but he only achieved real success in Banat, because the national awakening of the Germanic people was aided by the Serb and Romanian movements. In addition to this there were a firm base of people, who held on to their rural roots and folklore in Banat.

Thanks to the work of Steinacker and Brandsch a group of Saxons found the Swabians of Vojvodina mature enough to consider them allies in the field of national and political cooperation. Unfortunately this cooperation could not achieve good results, because of the First World War. However, the consciousness awakened Swabians surely did contribute to the process, during which the Swabians' political alignment could begin, in both halves of the parted Banat-then in the Kingdom of Romania and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

*Translated by Berta Csiki*

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